



Publishers Association of Los Angeles
EDUCATION • NETWORKING • RESOURCES

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UPCOMING MEETING:

MEMBERS-ONLY BRAINSTORMING SESSION: GET ANSWERS TO YOUR MOST PUZZLING PUBLISHING QUESTIONS

***Tuesday, January 21, 2013 -
7:00 pm***

Want some feedback on potential titles for your next book? Need help with finding a distributor? Want an opinion about a potential cover design? Not sure if you should spend money on exhibiting at an upcoming trade show?

Our January meeting at a PALA member's home will be a gigantic brainstorming session. Bring your books, cover design drafts, marketing ideas, requests for referrals, and anything else related to publishing and get answers from the other members in our group. Take advantage of the collective wisdom of your fellow publishers and publishing colleagues.

LOCATION:

A home in West Los Angeles. You will be given directions after your RSVP.

COST: FREE to PALA members. No guests for this meeting, please.

QUESTIONS: Sharon Goldinger, Program Chair, pplspeak@att.net, 949-581-6190.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: INFORMATION, IDEAS AND TIME

I don't make New Year's resolutions, so I'm not suggesting that trap for the rest of us. That's not what this message is about.

We all know that there is a lot of information out there about publishing and that everything has been changing daily for a few years, with no end in sight. The sheer volume of information and opportunities for free marketing tends to be mind boggling. The lack of time for learning, polishing, implementing, and updating is daunting.

The most prevalent comments that I hear are:

- There's too much information.
- There's not enough time to implement ideas.
- It's all coming at me too fast.

We talk about hiring interns or just allocating more hours in our day, but there are no pat answers to any of these problems.

If you decide to allocate more time, do so on a project-by-project basis, not as a commitment that encompasses too many issues at once. Information comes to us en masse, and it is tempting to take on too many things at once.

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PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION OF LOS ANGELES (PALA) <<http://www.pa-la.org>>

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President's Message (cont'd from page 1)

For instance, I'm in the process of finishing up the second edition of my book, *Loss and Found*, two novels, a novelette, and a screenplay. Additionally, I need to complete the work on three websites and get more current on social networking. I am also juggling the work with my organizations, the interactions with a big family, and other things.

I've begun to rely on a tricky but time-tested method called *collaboration*. I am cognizant of the legal aspects of this and the personal back-and-forth that can get heated at times, but I've found that it has quite a bit more upside than downside. Using an intern does not work for me for several reasons, and I've thought about cloning myself, but I've been told that one of me is more than enough. (I wonder what they mean by that.) With collaboration, it's important to pick a person whom you trust—and for me, that would not be a family member, whose objectivity would be questionable, not to mention the family politics involved if things go wrong—and work hard to communicate, communicate, communicate.

So what's on tap for you next year? Looking for new markets and sales expansion? Looking to refine your web presence and social media savvy? In a quandary about where the world of publishing is headed? We are always on the lookout for new topics to present at our informational meetings—anything relevant to small and midsize publishers. I urge you to completely investigate the IBPA website (www.ibpa-online.org) as well. There is a wealth of resources that complement what we are doing here. We will be presenting a teleseminar or two with people who are nationally recognized voices in publishing, as well as more blogging, marketing, niche publishing and sales, our twice-yearly members-only brainstorming sessions, scholarships to the IBPA Publishing University, and more. Recordings of most of our past meetings are still available if you would like to purchase one in the MP3 format. They are the same price as the meeting, \$5 for members.

My wishes to you and yours for a productive, happy, healthy, non-crazy-making 2014.

Gary Young
PALA President



MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS

PALA'S SOCIAL MEDIA

Get involved with PALA on social media. Join us on Facebook (Gary add live link) and Twitter (Gary add live link)—and tell your publishing friends and colleagues.

PUBLISHING UNIVERSITY

Don't miss the next IBPA Publishing University, March 21-22, 2014, at the Sheraton Fisherman's Wharf Hotel, San Francisco (<http://ibpapublishinguniversity.com/>).

Learn new information about how to get your content published, distributed, and read. Attend workshops about your cover, book description, and pitch for your book. Enjoy the peer-to-peer networking.

All the PALA board members as well as many PALA members have attended Publishing University during the past 25 years. It is a you-shouldn't-miss opportunity to learn. We guarantee it's worth your time and investment.

And if you're a member of IBPA and PALA, apply for an IBPA scholarship (<http://www.ibpa-online.org/affiliate-scholarship-program/>).

If you have any questions about PubU, feel free to contact any of the board members.



PALA LISTSERV

Have a question about publishing, marketing, or printing? Don't want to wait until the next members' only brainstorming session? Then use the PALA Listserv. It's a private group that lets PALA members and guests ask questions and share news, resources and information.

To sign up, go to <http://www.groups.yahoo.com>. If you're not already registered with Yahoo, you'll need to do that first (it's free). Then search for PA-LA (don't forget the hyphen). Follow the instructions for joining the list.



MEETING TRANSCRIPT

"BOOK MARKETING AT THE SPEED OF LIGHT" JOHN KREMER

As everybody here knows, John Kremer has long been the go-to guy for a treasure trove of creative marketing tips that absolutely work. If you're willing to put the time into writing or publishing, you need to find the time to join in the rewarding task of creative marketing and branding. John has taken it to an art—book marketing expert is an understatement. John is the owner of Open Horizons Publishing and the author of *1001 Ways to Market Your Books*; *Book Marketing Magic: How to Sell Your Novel, Children's Book, Memoir, or Nonfiction Book Like a Pro*; *The Complete Direct Marketing Source Book*; *Do-It-Yourself Book Publicity Kit*, and *Celebrate Today!* John's also the developer of the Relationships Matter marketing course for book authors, both fiction and nonfiction. He's a highly renowned book marketing consultant, and he's the founder of the Institute on Book Publishing Innovations as well as the Book Marketing Network social network for book authors and publishers. John, welcome to PALA.

Thanks. I appreciate the invitation to speak tonight. I'm going to focus on things that don't cost a lot of money and don't necessarily take a lot of time because most of us don't have a lot of either of those things, yet we want to sell our books. In today's world, that means that a lot of your marketing is going to be done online. I want to talk about strategies that you can use on the Internet and things you can do offline that can still have a dramatic impact on the sales of your books.

Let's start with online strategies. The most important online strategy—and the one that most people try to avoid with all undue haste because they think it's a lot of work when it really isn't—is to create relationships with high-traffic, highly targeted websites that your audience is already going to and that you're probably already going to for information because you're writing on a particular subject.

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Book Marketing at the Speed of Light (cont'd from page 2)

Whether it's fiction or nonfiction—if you're a crocheter, you probably go to three or four crocheting websites every week, if not more often. If you're a novelist, you're probably interacting with other fiction writers, either on Goodreads or on some of the different websites and blogs that are devoted specifically to the genre you're writing in. You probably already know some of these high-traffic websites because you are going to them. But even if you aren't going to them, if you haven't explored the websites that are already covering the topics you're writing about, there's a magic thing out there called Google—or Bing if you like (Bing's better)—where you find high-traffic websites.

Let's say that you were writing hummus recipes and have a whole cookbook just about hummus. You could type in "hummus recipes" and look at what websites are already up there that focus on hummus. You see simplyrecipes.com, allrecipes.com, foodnetwork.com, and epicurious.com. All of them are food sites devoted to different subjects. In this case, they have hummus recipes, so you would start to connect with them. You would say, "How would you like to have an excerpt from my new book, *All the Hummus Recipes You Could Ever Possibly Want?*" And the chances are that they would say yes because most of the top-rated websites in Google—the high-traffic, highly targeted websites—get most of their content from people like you and me. Ninety percent of them don't create all of their own content. They have other people creating the content for them. Often, they're giving it to them free or being paid to write for them or any combination of that. So your goal is to become a contributor to them on a regular basis. So you start by going to them and saying, "Okay, here's what we want to do. I've got this great book coming out. Would you like a few recipes?" And chances are, they're going to say yes.

Now, you would ask the same thing for whatever else you might be doing. Let's say you're writing a novel. Give an excerpt from the book to websites of people who are fans of the genre that you're writing in, whether it's romance, science fiction, horror, zombie fiction, or whatever it might be. They're going to love that kind of content. It's not that hard to find people who will take your content and want to have it and say, "Yes, give

me more!" That's how they get people to come to their websites on a regular basis—by having new, interesting content. So your job is to start to search for them. A good place to start is Google.

One of the great social networks for finding high-traffic websites and bloggers that are interested in content is LinkedIn. If you're not a member yet, you should be. The power of LinkedIn, I think, is in its groups. They have groups that cover almost any subject interest that you could think of. They have, for example, groups for romance writers and children's book writers and business book writers and people who are into business management. So you not only have the writers and the readers of such things, specific groups devoted to books, but you also have specific groups devoted to the topic that you're looking at. Also, you'll have a specific group of bloggers on that topic. So you've got the book lovers, you've got the general interest, and you've got the bloggers. And there are groups of all three of those for almost any subject you can think of. So you can go to LinkedIn.com and start searching for these groups and then actively start participating. Read some of the backlist comments, especially for the bloggers and for the general-interest people. They're going to tell you where they're going for information. They're going to tell you the sites that they like and the bloggers and the email newsletters that they read. And those are the ones that you want to contact to give away free content. The way that you build relationships online is by giving things away, by sharing. This is absolutely true in all the social networks, like Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, and LinkedIn. It's the sharing that gives you the connections and people who want to know more from you and want to share and participate, and you share back. That's how you start to build relationships.

With the high-traffic, highly targeted websites, the way that you build relationships is by giving them content. Their obligation in return is to give a link back to your website. You can tell them where to link to—whether it's a landing space for the book, a sell space for the Nook, the general website, your Facebook page, or your Amazon page. You tell them where to send the link to send the traffic. And you'd be surprised how many of these top-rated websites are hungry for more contributors who are happy to share content and therefore help them maintain their high rating and traffic, which you then siphon off a little bit of. I know one author who got

featured in a high-traffic website, and within 24 hours, 4,000 new people came to his website. He didn't tell me how many books he sold or how many people signed up for the newsletter. If you have a good website that's converting when people drop by there—they either buy or they sign up for your newsletter—then you have the beginnings of something very special.

The key of Internet marketing is building your list. You want people to sign up to hear from you on a regular basis. I don't care if you're writing nonfiction or fiction. You should have a regular newsletter—ideally, one that goes out once a week. People forget you if you don't do it often enough. It should go out weekly because then they're much more likely to open it and read it because they expect it from you every week. Ideally, it should go out on the same day. That way, they get to know you. During that same time, with your news, you can also provide interesting content. If you're writing a novel, you could give them a taste every week of a paragraph or a page from your next novel or your previous novel (the one you're selling now). You'd be amazed how many people will be interested in signing up for things like that. They want to connect with authors. For some strange reason, they think that authors are special people and that they have special powers because they wrote a book. That's kind of neat. They want to talk to us. They want to interact. Sometimes, in your newsletter, you might offer to do a teleseminar, where you simply take questions from your fans or your potential fans. You'd be surprised that when a novelist goes to a bookstore to speak, the first question isn't anything about the novel. It's "How do you find time to write?" or "How do you get your ideas?" or "How did you think of this character in your novel?" They ask those questions all the time. That's because they're a writer or they're thinking about writing a novel, and they want to get a feeling for how they go about doing that. But they also want to know more about the writer. That makes the book more interesting.

So your job is to give them good content. The fundamental basis of Internet marketing, first and foremost, is building relationships with top high-traffic websites targeted to your audience or your topic.

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Book Marketing at the Speed of Light (cont'd from page 3)

In other words, your topic might be crocheting, but your audience would probably be primarily women, though there are certainly a good number of men who also crochet. You probably won't go to *Men's Health* or other men's magazine to find crocheters. But you would go to a magazine like *Family Circle* to find crocheters. Women are much more likely to be a target market, and there are some wonderful women's websites out there, like ivillage.com and popsugar.com and a whole collection of mommy bloggers. These are stay-at-home mothers—they're women who were in the workforce, have had a baby, and are now staying home and taking care of the baby for anywhere from four months to two years or longer. They blog about their experience because they want to stay connected to the rest of the world. There are 15,000 or 20,000 mommy bloggers who are blogging about cooking, parenting, fashion, health, diet, fitness—anything that could interest a woman. Some mommy bloggers are very specialized and talk only about parenting or kids' activities. But some talk about anything that interests them. What am I doing today? Oh gosh, I just read a great book, a great novel, and they write about that. And a lot of mommy bloggers love interacting with book bloggers because they love the opportunity to interview them or to have some sort of content from them.

So the content that you offer could be an excerpt from your book. It could be the opportunity for them to interview you, either in a teleseminar like this or in a blog-talk radio show or in a podcast or maybe even a written interview. They may ask you to take questions from their readers and do a Q&A column. They may have you write a guest post on their blog or write a series of articles. There are all kinds of ways that you can offer them content that they would love to have. The key to creating relationships with these high-traffic websites is that on the other side, you have to have a website or a blog. You have to have some place—a home on the Internet—that they can connect to and send traffic to and check you out. If you don't have that home on the Internet, they have no way of checking you out. It still amazes me how many businesses have no presence on the web. I maintain a database of the top independent bookstores, and it still surprises me how many independent bookstores don't have a website. To me, that's a no-brainer. If I'm running a retail shop, I would want a website so that

people could find me, find out what events were happening at my bookstore, or even have the chance to interact a little bit—have a blog or something. These websites could be so important, and yet so many people don't have them. But authors need them. You need to have at least one website or someplace on the Internet that you call home. It could be a blog, and it could be a blog that's hosted on Blogspot or something like that.

One of the best-selling self-published authors of the past couple years is Amanda Hocking, and her website is a Blogspot blog. And that's it. She doesn't pay any hosting fees. She doesn't have the website amandahocking.com—her website is amandahocking.blogspot.com. It's interesting. I checked to see if she has amandahocking.com; she doesn't. Someone else does, and they're willing to sell it for \$1,000. Amanda should have done that when she got her \$2 million deal for four books. She should have bought the website so she could have a real home on the Internet. Find a way to have a home on the Internet. And then build an Internet newsletter, using AWeber or Constant Contact or iContact or GetResponse. There are a number of neat services that will offer you the opportunity to do a newsletter on a regular basis. Or you could use the service I use, Red Oak (redoakcards.com). All of those are great, and you spend about \$20 a month for that service. If you have a website, that costs you about \$30 a year, or less in some cases, to have a unique URL like bookmarkit.com or askjohnkremer.com. (Those are some of my websites.) It costs me about \$200 a year to host 40 websites.

Now most of you are not going to go that crazy and host that many websites. I don't recommend it. It splits your attention too much. I really encourage you to focus. Spend time on building your website, blogging two to three times a week, writing some new content, and posting a newsletter once a week. That newsletter can be the content from your blogging, so you don't have to think of something new. You could just share what you've already shared in your blogging. Or you could share things that you shared on Facebook or Pinterest or Twitter or LinkedIn or Google+ or whatever other social network you might be involved in.

The social network that's providing the most return on time invested is probably Facebook for most authors. But I have found lately that Pinterest is driving a lot more traffic than anything else is for me. But Pinterest is a visual social network.

So if you're going to make use of it, you've got to add graphics to your blog or website on a regular basis so you have something to share that connects back to your website.

Pinterest drives about 500 or 600 new people to one of my websites every day. But that's a very graphic website. It's called infographicaday.com, so it's designed to take advantage of Pinterest. But Pinterest also drives traffic to my other websites. The neat thing about Pinterest is that it's a real chance to reinvigorate old blog posts. If you had a blog for 5 or 10 years, a lot of those blog posts are probably no longer being read. I've been going back to some of my old blog posts—I add a new graphic to it, and then I pin it. Suddenly, there's more traffic coming to my blog and to that specific page. So it's a neat tool to use, and it forces me to think more graphically.

A lot of people will try to sell you on spending a lot of time on Facebook or Twitter or Pinterest or LinkedIn to sell your book. I'm not going to do that. I think you shouldn't spend more than 10 to 20 minutes a day on social networks. If you're spending more time than that, you're not writing. You're not marketing. You're having fun on the Internet. You really should think in terms of "Is it giving me a return on investment?" If Facebook is driving traffic to your website, and therefore driving book sales, then yes, spend more time on it. But if it isn't, then minimize your time. The minute I finish writing a blog post and post it, I pin it to Pinterest, I post it to Facebook, I tweet it on Twitter, and I post it to Google+. Within three minutes, I've connected to four social networks—and Twitter feeds into LinkedIn, so I've also connected to LinkedIn. It's all done in less than three minutes after writing the blog post. That's the way to use a social network. If you're going to spend time on social networks, I would recommend LinkedIn to make connections with those high-traffic bloggers and websites that are interested in your subject. And it doesn't always have to be high traffic. So, back to the hummus recipe book. Let's say there's someone who's got a website called allhummusalldthetime.com. You want to make a connection with them because their readers love hummus.

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Book Marketing at the Speed of Light (cont'd from page 4)

They're looking for some way to make a new hummus recipe. So even though they may only have 1,000 visitors a month, they can still be major traffic to your website, compared with a site like ivillage.com, where no one cares about hummus. (That's not true. I know there are people there who love hummus.)

So it's not just the high-traffic, but it's also the highly targeted websites. There are some highly targeted websites that don't have that kind of traffic, but they have passion. They have people who come there all the time to check out new things that are happening for things that they're passionate about—whether it's zombie fiction or business management or personal finance or hummus recipes or crocheting or whatever it is that you write about. Those are the places you want to start spending time on to get to know the people who are your potential audience. I'm surprised by how many people write books but have never visited the sites that are devoted to the same topic. Where did they do their research? It seems to me they should have been going to some of these websites to find out additional information or additional stories to put into their book. That's what I do. I'm always looking for new ideas, and I do a lot of that on the Internet.

So that's the beginning of Internet marketing. There are a lot of other tricks that people keep talking about, like writing online articles and doing online press releases. But the key is still creating relationships with high-traffic, targeted websites and blogs and ezines or email newsletters.

Q: What are some of the best strategies for selling an eBook if your distributor insists that the eBook must be sold through them?

In that case, you can still drive traffic to whatever eBook site the distributor has put your eBook on. If you have a distributor that wants an exclusive to your eBook but won't put it on Amazon Kindle or the iPad or Nook or some of the other eReaders, then they shouldn't have an exclusive, and you should tell them, "If you aren't putting it on Amazon or on the Nook, you don't have the right to have an exclusive." But then you say, "Okay, we'll sell it to them. That's fine—I want to send it through Amazon." You don't really sell eBooks through your own website. Most eBook sales are going to happen through the Kobo site or the

Nook site or the iTunes iBookstore—or to a Kindle. Ninety percent of the eBooks are going to sell through some sort of eBook network or eBookstore. Again, it could be Smashwords or something like that as well. There are a number of different eBookstores out there. But you didn't clarify what kind of distributor says it has to be sold through them, so I don't know if you're talking about a national network or a distributor who's—.

Q: It's the IBPA-affiliated one: SPU (Small Press United).

That's fine. If it's an eBook version of the printed book that they're distributing, they should take care of that. And I would want them to since they should get better distribution than you do. They're going to get a piece of the action, but you can still drive traffic to the sites that they've put it up on. And they should have put it up on Kindle. If you have some new eBooks coming out and you don't want to get stuck with this kind of exclusivity, then you can just create a new division of your company with a new press name and self-distribute if you want to, for the new book. That's one way to get around it, where you create a second imprint that is not contract obligated to be distributed through the other outlet, whatever it might be. For example, my books are distributed through National Book Network, but I actually upload some eBooks that are not distributed by them and are not under contract under a new press name, Open Horizons, that I just simply upload myself and sell directly.

Q: Do those need a separate ISBN number?

With eBooks, you don't need an ISBN. I don't use my ISBN numbers for eBooks.

Q: You mentioned having the big site link to our site. Have you dealt with no-follow links with that? A lot of these sites will link back, but as a no-follow link.

That's okay. The no-follow link only means that the search engine doesn't give a value to it. But the people can still click through to your website. To me, that's the most important thing—the opportunity for the people on that site to click through to your site. Yes, it's nice when they have a do-follow link, and it gives you some extra Google juice for that, but the reason I'm on that high-traffic website is for them to send traffic directly to me. I don't really care about the search engines.

Q: Do you manually post your blog to all

the social networks, or do you use something like HootSuite?

I do it manually. It only takes three minutes, and I do it because I want to make each post a little different. If you use HootSuite, they're all the same on all the different social networks. If people are following you on more than one social network, they're going, "Oh John, he's always doing the same thing." So I like to make them a little bit different and unique to that particular venue. I think that people who follow me on Twitter are a little bit different than the people who follow me on Facebook and the people who follow me on Pinterest.

Q: Do you write a little message at the front of the blog posts?

No, I just tweet the blog post with a special thing. I did a blog post on my book marketing best sellers the other day. It was a last-ditch book titling strategy, and it was just a funny thing. For Twitter, I put different hashtags than I would for Facebook. And for Pinterest, I was pinning the image that went along with it. So again, that would be different. The only reason I'm on Google+, even though it's becoming much more active as a social network and it's growing, is that Google likes it. It makes a difference on how quickly Google ranks your blog posts and starts driving traffic to those blog posts. So I always Google+ it.

Q: I'm wondering about sponsorships for my book or getting sponsors for a book.

Sponsorships can take an incredible amount of work. And I'm not sure that that's the best way to use your time. If there's something that's a natural fit for you—let's say that you wrote a book about safe driving habits. There's a very good chance that there's an automobile or auto insurance company that would love to partner with you in some way. The tough thing is finding that company and the decision maker in that company. There are a lot of people who might want to sponsor you in some way, but finding them can be very tough. If they sponsor you, they're going to pay you money to be a spokesperson for them, or they'll fund something. They may help you pay for your publicity tour. They may send you around the country to publicize your book and also (of course) publicize whatever they have to offer or to speak in their name.

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Book Marketing at the Speed of Light (cont'd from page 5)

You really have to drill down into that company and try to find out who's the decision maker for that kind of activity, and then you have to sell them on it. That means, ideally, that you know what they're doing in terms of marketing or advertising in the next year. So it all becomes very complicated. There are a lot of details there. But I would certainly explore sponsorships. Connect with them on LinkedIn. Or go to their website and see if they're asking people to submit sponsorship ideas. Some websites are. Some places are looking for people or nonprofit groups to sponsor.

About 10 years ago, I was on a seminar with someone who was talking about how he built his publishing company around sponsorships. He said the trick to getting sponsorships was to get a nonprofit to go in with you. In other words, if you have a safe-driving habits book, you would try to find a nonprofit group aimed at teen-driving safety or something like that. Now you have not just the strength of a lone author going to a company to get sponsored but also the nonprofit group that's going to get a percentage of your profits or royalties, and you'll have other synergies with them. Now the corporation is going to be much more likely to want to sponsor you because there's a nonprofit involved and not just a lone entrepreneur. But it takes digging, and it can take time. Even if you get a company to say yes, it can still take up to a year for them to go through all the ins and outs of making that happen. They have to get their marketing, sales, and advertising all involved to do an integrated campaign.

Q: Can you spend a few minutes talking about selling through retail outlets other than bookstores?

Yes, I think it's a great venue. The key thing to selling to other retail outlets is that you want to focus on the chains because that's the most efficient way to do it. If you sell to Home Depot, they have, say, a thousand stores, and they're going to buy five books per store, so that's 5,000 copies. Whereas if you sold to Joe's Lumber Company, they buy five copies, and it often takes as much work as selling to Home Depot. The first thing is to go into the chain and find out where they sell books within that store. Home Depot sells books, but where do they sell them? Do they have a separate section for books? Or do they integrate the books into the different sections of the store?

Find out where and how they merchandise their books and where the book would appear in the store. Then when you approach them, you can say, "Here's where my book would fit in your store." And that's the most important phrase that you can use in selling to specialty retailers. That phrase is so important because it tells them that you know their store. It's amazing how many people try to sell to a catalog that they've never seen a copy of, or they try to sell to a retailer, but they've never been in that store. The ignorance—that you've never participated, that you've never bought from them—is going to become clear very quickly, and they're not going to buy from you. You haven't bought from them. You're not a customer. You don't know them—you don't know their customers. Why would they buy from you? So the first thing you have to do is show them that you know their store, that you know where your book fits in their store. Then you can sell it.

And there are specialty retail outlets that actually sell fiction as well. Urban Outfitters sells books that fit a theme. So let's say that they have safari clothing for sale. If you have a jungle novel, they're interested. And if that jungle novel has a cover that matches the color of the clothes that they're selling, they're even more interested because it's all merchandising to them, and they use the books to sell the clothes. And the books set an atmosphere in the store. But they also sell the books. And they do it quite well. So think about where your book would fit. There are specialty retailers that would fit for almost any kind of book you do—if it's a crocheting book, then you've got all the craft and hobby stores; if it's a gardening book, then you've got all the landscaping stores and gardening shops. If you've got a business book—I don't know if Kinko's is still doing it, but at one point they had a small books section, and so did Office Depot and OfficeMax and Staples. One of the other questions you ask when you visit one of their outlets is, "Who would I contact at national headquarters?"

There are also groups that do things like hospital gift shops. There's a company that does spinner racks in hospital gift shops, and one publisher also sells books from some other publishers. So, again, you would go into the hospital gift shop if you think your book has a market there and ask the volunteer, "Who services this rack? Who would buy that? Is it a separate company or do you buy directly from the publisher?" So you ask some of those kinds of questions. A lot of times

the retailer has no idea. But if you visit two or three outlets, the chances are that you're going to find someone who knows something, who can send you somewhere, who can tell you a little bit more about what's going on. And that's what you want.

So you want to get to know the store and the company. Then you can pitch better. The same is true if you want to sell to a catalog. You want to make sure that you have a copy of the catalog and you know exactly where your book would fit within that catalog. Then pitch them with the idea of "Here's my book, and I think it would fit on page 53, alongside these two other books." So let's say that you have a zombie novel and that they've got two books in there already about zombie novels. Now you know where to pitch, and you can say, "Yes, if you've been selling these zombie novels and doing good business with them, why not have a new zombie novel and make even more money?"

And to pitch a catalog, I tear a page out, write some copy in the same way that they do, take a graphic of my book, and paste it on that page. Then I send the page in with my letter so they can visualize how my book would fit there. You could do the same thing with Home Depot or other retail stores you want to sell to. Put your book there and take a picture and send that to them. "This book would fit perfectly here, next to this other book. I took a picture to show you how good they look together." You'd be surprised how much of a difference that can make to help the buyer visualize your book sitting in with the rest of the merchandise. And most people don't do that. Most people say, "Here's the book, and I think it will fit here. It's a perfect match." But they don't help the buyer visualize it. They don't show that they know exactly where it fits in that store or catalog. I guarantee you that you have a 10- to 20-times better chance if you do a little bit of work and research to help buyers visualize your book sitting in their store or their catalog.

The neat thing about these specialty retailers is that they don't really care about a book's publication date. So you could have a book that's five years old and still sell into that market, if the book is still relevant to that market.

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If it's dated material—let's say you're writing about hummus, and the new rage about hummus is to use black beans instead of garbanzo beans, and you don't include any black-bean hummus recipes—they may not be able to use it because everybody's talking about black-bean hummus. There are patterns of things that go cool and hot, so your book might have to be updated. But if they're interested in buying 5,000 copies, I bet most of you would be happy to update it or even to put the store logo on your cover. And that's one of the nice things about selling to specialty retail outlets—you can offer to customize a book if they buy enough copies. And with print on demand, that's easy enough to do. But the disadvantage of print on demand is that you may not be able to get the cost of one copy down far enough to allow for the larger discounts that specialty retailers usually require.

We sell to bookstores at a 40 percent discount, but most specialty retailers are accustomed to buying at a 50 percent discount or higher. If you're selling to the chains, they're probably going to want a 55 or 60 percent discount. So you have to make sure that the cost of printing the book fits within that kind of discount range. It's possible to do it. *1001 Ways to Market Your Books* is a big book—700 pages. But I charge \$27.95 and at 10,000 quantity, I can buy the book for a little over \$3. I don't always print 10,000 quantity, but I can price within that structure. The most I've ever paid for printing is \$5 a book, in a smaller quantity. That's, again, a 700-page book. If you have the typical book of today, which is somewhere between 160 and 300 pages, your cost of printing is much lower than mine. So that's something about specialty retail that I think is really valuable.

Q: Can you talk about getting reviews for your book when it's a year old?

For the most part, you're not going to get book reviews when your book is a year old. Some special-interest magazines might do it, but the major magazines are only interested in the newer stuff. So if you want to get publicity, you don't do it by getting a review, which (in my mind) is the worst publicity you can get, quite honestly. The review is basically an expression of that particular reviewer's bias. I've had some really bad reviews of *1001 Ways* because the guy didn't understand anything about marketing,

and he was reviewing my book and saying it was bad because he didn't know what he was talking about. But if I get an interview in that magazine or I get to write an article for them or they excerpt something from my book—and they could do that a year afterward—that, I can control. I can go back to the magazine every three months with a new story idea, a new interview, a new article, or another excerpt—things that could tie into something that's happening today in that particular world, just so I could say that all the hummus recipes used to use garbanzo beans and now they use black beans. I could give them some new black-bean recipes that are in my book or that will be in the new edition of my book.

A book is never old as long as it's still timely. And the neat thing for nonfiction books is that a lot of them don't get dated. But *1001 Ways to Market Your Books* does get dated. After a while, I have to do a new edition. But a book like Norman Vincent Peale's *The Power of Positive Thinking*—that's a book for the ages. It still sells 50,000 copies a year. And Norman Vincent Peale has been dead for 20 years now. But it's still relevant. It's still valuable. So a book on crocheting or hummus can probably stay viable for 10, 20, 30 years or more, depending on the marketplace and how trends change. It's hard if you're talking about crocheting a particular kind of sweater that goes out of style because then that book is going to be out of style for a while. But there are always some customers who want to go with that old style. So you've always got some books that sell. I don't think a book ever dies. I think it just goes into different stages of life, from teenager to adult to senior citizen. But it still has a marketplace during that time.

Q: Could you spend a few minutes talking about advertising and promotions? A lot of people say it's not worth advertising a book because of the return. Or promotions—maybe bundling an eBook with a pBook—any ideas that you'd like to tell us about?

Sure. With advertising, the reality is that buying an ad—in newspapers or magazines or on TV or radio—is probably not going to pay off for most small publishers or self-publishers. You just don't have the distribution to make it happen. But if you have something beyond the book, like consulting or a membership site or tape sets—some sort of back-end product—then you could possibly have advertising pay off, but in most cases you won't. The other

exception is the special-interest magazine. I've seen, for example, people advertise a book on yoga in *Yoga Journal* because it's very special, it's very focused, and the readership is very focused. And that might make sense. So test with a small ad, see if it pays off, and then see if you want to do a larger ad. The place where advertising does work is in Google AdWords or Facebook Ads, where you can control your exposure. In other words, you don't advertise. You set a budget of, say, \$10 a day or \$10 a week and see if it pays off. Test your ad copy, and then if the traffic that comes from that buys your book or signs up for something or buys a back-end product, then you can test it and find out very quickly whether it's going to pay off to keep doing Google AdWords. I've seen people be very successful with Facebook Ads or Google AdWords when they really did the testing and found out exactly the language they had to use to get the right people—the people who are going to buy the book when they click through—to click on the ad. You only pay for the clicks.

So Google AdWords is great. Facebook Ads is a new market that I think can work, but you have to test it. I tried doing Facebook Ads, but I was bidding way too low, so it wasn't showing up anywhere. I was trying to get a penny an ad, and Facebook was just not going to cooperate. So probably at 5 or 10 cents an ad or a click-through would have been effective. So let's say you wrote a novel that's just like Stephen King's best novels. You could advertise on Google AdWords and say, "Whenever anybody searches for Stephen King, I want my ad to show up. And I'm going to advertise 'If you like Stephen King, you'll love John Kremer. Click here to find out more.'" Then I'd test the ad to make sure that, over time, I got people who were clicking through and buying my book. But you can buy whatever keywords you want on Google and Facebook so that you can be associated with the topic or the person. You could do that with nonfiction, too. For example, every time somebody googles Jack Canfield, your ad shows up because you have an ad that Jack Canfield readers would love. The ads are all testable, and they're relatively inexpensive, compared to a magazine ad, which can cost anywhere from \$300 to \$50,000. The TV ads are out of the question. You could certainly test radio ads in your local market, and if it works there then expand out, but my guess is that a radio ad won't work for you.

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And TV ads are too expensive. But there are things you can do with Google AdWords and Facebook Ads that can be tested at a very low cost. For \$50 or \$100, you can find out if the ads are working or not working. If they are working, keep going with them.

There's also a website called Blogads (blogads.com) that allows you to advertise on special-interest blogs. If you have a blog, you can sell ads on your blog in the same network. It's a neat little website where some of the ads are \$10 or \$20 for one-week exposure on a particular blog or website. Those things are certainly worth testing. I do know some people who have been very successful advertising their Kindle eBooks on some of the different Kindle networks—Kindle blogs and Kindle websites. Again, if the ad is within your budget and it's worth testing, then do so.

Q: Are there any promotions that you've run that have been successful for you?

The best kind of promotion is offering something free—generally speaking, eBooks, which could be an excerpt from your book or a completely new book. It could be anywhere from 20 to 80 pages, and you give it away when people come to either visit your website or sign up for your newsletter. The key strength that you have on the Internet, ultimately, is how many people are on your customer list or your email newsletter list or your buyers list. Email signatures of people who have given you permission to email them are the most valuable things that you own on the Internet. And so getting people to sign up for your newsletter is really important. Generally, the way you do this is by giving something away.

But you can't just give it away on your own website. You have to say to the high-traffic website that you've created a relationship with, "During the next three weeks, I'm giving away a copy of this special eBook that all of your readers are going to be interested in." You give it a good title. Target it to that specific blog. And if you're giving something away, you can make dozens of the copies of the eBook with different titles that target different audiences if you want. Then when you go to that blog, they write about it and say, "John Kremer is giving away an incredibly great eBook during the next 10 days. Click here to get that free copy." And that click links to your

website, where they have to sign up for your newsletter or give you their email address in order to get the free book. This has been done a lot. It's been very successful. It's still successful. I see people doing it all the time. The key is to have something that the people from that website would be interested in.

Q: Do you need special software to execute that? To capture the email address and send it out? Or are you doing it manually?

No, generally speaking, there are two ways to do it. One is through a shopping cart. The second way is through your email. If you have an email newsletter and a newsletter service provider, they will automate that process to send out the eBook link back to the people who sign up. And then it takes them to another page on your website where they can download the eBook. And you can keep it simple. You can just give away the eBooks as PDFs, or you can give them the option of downloading it as a Kindle eBook or a Kobo ePub book. That's your choice. I like to keep things simple, so I tend to allow it to be downloaded as either a PDF or a Word document because everyone on the Internet can read those.

Another effective promotion is a contest. There are contests on Facebook and Twitter. Let's say you have a question on Facebook, and you say, "We're going to take the best answer to the question." And they answer in the comments section. Or maybe you make it that everyone who likes a post will be entered into a drawing to win a free copy of your book. Those things can be very effective to get people to like your page or to like a post or to share a post.

There are a couple of other things that I would like to talk about. I think that every author should try to get on national TV. Find the right show or shows where you would fit and send one email or letter a month and pitch them with a new reason why they should interview or feature you. National TV is still the biggest mass market out there. One appearance on a national TV show does so much more than just sell books for you. It establishes your credibility as a speaker for other kinds of publicity. I really recommend you spend the time to try to get on a national TV show. Two of the top bookselling shows out there are the Comedy Central shows, *The Daily Show*, with Jon Stewart and *The Colbert Report*, with Stephen Colbert. They sell books, but again, you have to be targeted

to them. They like social interests and politics and economics and a few topics like that. They're probably not going to be interested in cooking with hummus or crocheting sweaters unless you could make it political in some way. But they sell books. So they're a great venue. There are an incredible number of shows out there that are looking for potential guests. And Jon Stewart and Stephen Colbert both sell a ton of books when people are on their shows. When Glenn Beck was on Fox, if he featured a book on his show, it was an instant best seller. Howard Stern can do that. Ellen can do it if she loves a book. Obviously, Oprah did it all the time. You should put 1 to 2 percent of your time every month into finding the national TV shows that might be interested and then pitching them every month.

I know one author who pitched Oprah every month religiously for two years. And then one day, out of the blue, the producer called and said, "We want you on." The reason he got called and not some other author is that he was in front of them every month. It's "What did you do for me lately? When did you show up?" Most of the media producers are going to go immediately to the person they've heard the most from, the person they've started to establish a relationship with—simply because you send them something every month.

Also, I really like magazine publishing and think you should spend some time focusing on the magazines that are addressed to your audience or your topic. Offer to do an interview or be an expert for an article they're doing. Be a background expert. Or offer to write an article for them. Or, once in a while, send them a sidebar that they can use free. A sidebar is some little bit of content to put on the side of an article that's not long enough to fit the whole page—some extra material that might contribute to that same article. It may be something they've held onto for six months, but they can use it now because it fits an article.

Q: What are the best next steps to take once you've done a virtual book tour?

You should be on Facebook posting or tweeting about your appearances on the blog tour or the book tour. You can keep doing that for up to six months afterward. Keep sending traffic to that blogger or that website.

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They're going to love you the next time you come by and say, "Would you like to do another interview with me?" Once you've done a virtual book tour—for example, you went to 30 different blogs or websites and did interviews or they reviewed you—you should be going back to those same people, at least once every three months, and say, "Let's do something again. We had great traffic; we had great fun. Let's do it again." Your book doesn't have to be new. You don't have to have a special promotion with your book. You can just say, "Let's do it again. I'd be happy to do another guest post for you or an interview or give you a little excerpt from my book." And I would keep that relationship going by contacting them at least once every three months with an offer for some new content. It's very possible to do a new virtual book tour every three months and not have it be so complicated or arduous.

The ideal virtual book tour is one where you give all the websites the same content, but they only get to use part of it. They each choose their own unique part of it. So I might give a list of 20 ways to sell books on the Internet, but I tell each of my partners that they can only pick their five favorites. And you need to write why those are your five favorites. Now I've written one blog post, with 20 pieces of content, but each of my host bloggers or websites get to pick five of them. So it's different content on each blog, and now I'm engaging their fans and their tribe in a different way because they're picking the content and writing about why they picked these five as their favorites. So the engagement level on that blog post is going to be two to five times greater than if I'd just written a blog post and they'd simply posted it without any introduction. We've engaged the host, and they, in turn, have engaged their tribe that loves them.

Q: If a book isn't completed—but almost completed—when do you suggest putting parts of the book on the website? I know there are copyright issues, but you mentioned putting parts of the book, excerpts, on your website.

Six months to two years in advance. You're building interest; you're building an audience. One person did a podcast as he was writing the novel. He read the novel as he was writing it, and he built up an audience over a two-year period. By the time he was finished with the book, he had 80,000 people subscribing to that

podcast. They were interested. How many of us would love to do a final podcast that says, "The book is done. You can buy it here." And 80,000 people go, "Finally!" and they go out and get it.

Also, let me just tag onto that. It's never too early to start building your platform. Your platform is your built-in audience. Sharing content that comes from your book or is subsidiary to your book in some way is always worthwhile—anywhere up to two years in advance of your book coming out—because you're building your audience. And that platform is what's going to help you sell a ton of books. Let's say that you start building that platform and you've got so many people signed up for your podcast—the guy who had 80,000 people signed up for his podcast has publishers pursuing him, saying, "We want to publish your book." He didn't have to go out and solicit them. They were coming to him because he had a platform.

Q: You were talking about a virtual book tour before, but I have never heard of that. You go to 30 blogs or websites and give them a portion of your book, and they post it on their website?

You contact them and say, "Here's what I'm offering. You could do an interview with me, you could review my book, you could post an excerpt, I could do a guest post." You could offer whatever it is you want to do. And each blog picks whatever they want in terms of content. The virtual book tour has to be in a concentrated period of time to be effective. Otherwise, you don't get that buzz building. And you want buzz building. So the more websites you can be on in a shorter period of time, the better it is. Then chances are that your target audience has seen something about your blog tour three or four times and they're thinking, "Wow, I need to pay attention because this person I admire and this person I admire and this person I admire are all hosting him right now."

Q: But it's also good to send out a notice saying, "I'm doing a virtual blog tour, and here are all the places and times that you can chat with me," right?

Right. And my Relationships Matter course is all about effective virtual blog tours. It tells you how to do it right. When you appear on another blog, your obligation is not just to provide them that content but to let all your followers know that you're on that site today. And then, three days later, let them know, "I was on that site three days ago. You should check it out." And three months later, "If you

missed my appearance on such-and-such blog, go check it out now!" In other words, you're going to have a much better chance of that website or blogger being interested in having further content from you if you send them traffic. That means post about it. Blog about it. Tweet about it. Pin your appearance on that blog. And repin it.

For example, about a month ago, I did a blog post on 25 health benefits of bananas. I did it as a graphic, and then I pinned it. I repinned it last night, and within the last 10-15 hours, 53 people have repinned it even though I had already pinned it once. So you can go back to your social networks and say, "If you missed it, here it is again!" And the value of the virtual book tour is that it builds interest so that people who are sitting on the fence get off the fence and go to Amazon and buy your book. But the best virtual book tours are the ones that are either on an incredible number of websites—I've seen people blog tour as many as 200 websites because then you're really creating buzz, but you have to automate that process more—or on high-traffic blogs only.

You may have heard of Tim Ferriss and his book *The 4-Hour Workweek*. He launched that with a virtual book tour on high-traffic websites. And he had made friends with these people by meeting them and saying, "How can I help you?" And then when he was ready to release this book, he went to them and said, "Will you write about this?" and they all said, "Yes, this is an incredible book! I want a 4-hour workweek. I will write about it!" As a result of what was happening online, he was invited onto national TV shows. And his book became a best seller in a week or two.

Q: I'd like your opinion on building big lists versus having targeted lists of involved people. What has been your experience?

The most important thing is to have people who are interested in what you're writing about. So I want the targeted list. I'd rather have a smaller targeted list than a large list of people who don't care because you want them to open your email, and that means that they've got to do a little bit more. They have to take that action to open your email. So you want the targeted people.

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You want the passionate people. Those are the people you can sell your book to or sell the new program you have (or whatever else you have) to. They're the people who are going to come back to you and say, "When is your next novel coming out?" or "Do you do coaching? I need help. My crocheting patterns always fall apart." Or whatever it might be. Whatever you're writing about, you want passionate fans. We talk about it in the Internet marketing world as "building tribes." This means you're the chief of the tribe, but the tribe is your passionate group of followers. These are people who really, really want to know more. Seth Godin has one of the most passionate tribes I know of. Whenever he brings out a new book, his whole tribe is interested in it. And they all talk about it. A tribe is basically a fan club. Ideally, your newsletter subscribers or the people signing up to get emails from you are signing up as a fan club. They love what you do, and they want to know more.

Again, as long as we're doing this, you can get a free copy of *Facebook Marketing for Book Authors* by going to bookmarketingbestsellers.com and signing up for my Book Marketing Tip of the Week.

Q: How else can we reach you? Are there any other websites that you would like to let us know about? And also, I know you do private coaching. Would you like to talk about that?

A lot of people come to me for coaching and want to know what the five things are that they should do for their book. So they've read my book *1001 Ways to Market Your Books*, but they get confused. There are too many. What are the five best for their book? And I can, in a half hour or an hour, lay out a strategy for anybody who's publishing any kind of book—here's what you should do to sell more books. Generally speaking, I'm limiting them to about five things. And I will outline for them. I really encourage you all to get on national TV. But in the coaching session, I would say, "Here are the shows you need to be on," and if I have any contact information, I will give that to them so that the door is maybe more readily open. Or I might tell them what magazines they should be approaching and how to approach those magazines because I read about 100 different magazines every month. I know what they're looking for. I know what they've used. I know what kind of content

they want and how they want to use a book. I can tell people, "Here's the person to contact, here's the best fit, and here's how to pitch them." So you take the content in the 700-page book, and you would think that everything's covered, but I can go into even more detail to apply it to a very specific book.

And that's the same with what websites you should be talking to. I've learned a lot about the key websites that really can make a difference because of all the consulting I've done in the past. So that's the coaching. Right now, I'm doing an ongoing half-price special. I used to charge \$500 an hour; now I charge \$250 an hour. But you pay only for the time you use. There's a new website that I've done called huganauthor.com, and I would encourage that you join. It's free to join, and its purpose is to share your favorite books or authors or blog posts on writing. It's actually a bookmarking site. It's sort of like StumbleUpon or Digg, but here you're hugging an author. You submit a link, and it takes you through it and puts up a picture and a title and a description. You can share, of course, your own links. You can say, "I wrote a great book—why don't you check it out?" but you can also share other authors of your favorite books. You can have your readers go to Hug an Author and hug you. It's really interesting. The website is getting more and more traffic. It's been live for only about two and a half weeks, and its Alexa ranking is now in the 700,000s, from unranked three weeks ago. So it's getting traffic. My goal is to get it ranked in the top 100,000 websites and get 50,000-100,000 people coming every month to hug an author.



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