



Publishers Association of Los Angeles
EDUCATION • NETWORKING • RESOURCES

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MEETING TRANSCRIPT: APRIL 23, 2014

"New Tools for Selling Books" Carla King



UPCOMING MEETING:

HOW TO ATTRACT CORPORATE SPONSORS

7PM, MONDAY, MAY 11, 2015

Have you ever thought of approaching corporate sponsors for your book, publishing, speaking or events? America's most successful companies do it. Why not those of us in the publishing world?

Our speaker will provide steps you can take to attract corporate sponsors to help defray your publishing costs. Here are some specifics of what you'll learn:

- How to identify potential sponsors
- How to attract these sponsors
- How much money to ask for

Linda Hollander is the author of the #1 best-selling book *Corporate Sponsorship in 3 Easy Steps: Get Funding from Sponsors Even If You're Just Getting Started*.

LOCATION: Veterans Memorial Building, 4117 Overland Avenue, Culver City. Corner of Overland & Culver.

COST: Free for PALA members.

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

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

STAYING CURRENT

Dear PALA members:

As I scan the field of the tens of thousands of publishers that now exist, and I compare the energies, the publishing output, the success, and the challenges that our membership faces to those of the competition, I am impressed by the energy and commitment that our publishers have. One crucial thing is missing, and this one is a toughie: enough time to do it all. We talk about this quite a bit, and I've referred to it before.

How can we maximize our time and minimize our expense, while marketing our books as aggressively as needed in today's market? It's always important to have organized production, bookkeeping, and marketing systems to help you seriously concentrate on the bottom line.

At PALA we have tried interns, and this is a great way to go if you are lucky. We have not been lucky so far. Without a physical address where people come in to work, which is our case and may be yours, we need to be creative to entice and keep interns. We have been partially successful by offering specific educational opportunities in addition

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PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION OF LOS ANGELES (PALA)

<<http://www.pa-la.org>>

President: Gary Young (artsy12@earthlink.net)

Vice-President: Sharon Goldinger (pplspeak@att.net)

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Treasurer: David Evans (teddytravelerbear@earthlink.net)

Facebook: [facebook.com/PublishersAssociationofLosAngeles](https://www.facebook.com/PublishersAssociationofLosAngeles)

Twitter: @PALAPUB

to academic credit. Nothing beats the one-on-one, though, so we also try to get them involved in meetings. But, as with anything, the time involved with finding and training an intern taxes our already bulging time commitments. So what are some other options?

Collaborating with other small publishers in joint marketing ventures can be tricky to set up, but once systems are in place, it can become easier with time. Overcoming the inertia that hampers motivation to start new things and answering the questions about which person does what and how much time would be involved are real challenges with the collaborative model, but it can all be done.

Applications such as Hootsuite can automate your social networking and limit the time drain. Our goal is to bring you this information in upcoming programs.

Platforms such as WordPress, combined with good Search Engine Optimization (SEO), are efficient places to host your website, but you need much more. A website alone without additional marketing support will not do the job. And SEO is constantly evolving; we will continue to discuss it during our programs. Blog tours can be successful, as well as marketing websites such as Goodreads and BookBub. We have discussed some of these resources already, and we'll revisit these and other digital topics and resources often.

We thank our parent organization, the Independent Book Publishers Association, for further support in all of these areas. Their resources for publishers, constantly updated, are impressive.

The biggest single impediment that we face is the fear of starting something new that we do not fully grasp and the concern that we will make a mistake. But as with anything, risk can bring rewards, and with a support system such as PALA, the risk can be minimized.

Publishing is daunting, but if you have the passion and the energy, as well as the

active curiosity required to stay current, you can have great success, and it can be immensely stimulating and even fun.

Gary Young
PALA President



MEMBER NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS:

LET US KNOW YOUR NEWS

Do you have a new book, event, or other item of interest to your fellow PALA members? We want to share your news with the group. Please e-mail Sharon Goldinger, pplspeak@att.net, to get your announcement in the next PALA newsletter.

STEVE'S A-FIB BLOG

PALA member Steve S. Ryan's Atrial Fibrillation blog provides unbiased, up-to-date information about Atrial Fibrillation (A-Fib) from someone not associated with a specific treatment or device manufacturer, pharmaceutical company, HMO, or medical insurance provider.

Blog posts written by Steve, who has first-hand experience as a former A-Fib patient, highlight news in the world of A-Fib, including treatment options.

Check it out now [here](#).

BRING US YOUR BLOGS

We want to know what PALA members are blogging about. Send us a link, title,

and a one- or two-sentence description of your blog, and we'll share it with other members. E-mail Sharon Goldinger, pplspeak@att.net, with your info.

Soon, PALA will be launching its own blog, and you'll want to follow it for important news and insights from the publishing world, locally and beyond. Stay tuned for more details!

MORE REASONS TO JOIN IBPA

As a PALA member, you're eligible for a \$30 credit toward renewing your membership in or joining IBPA, making dual membership a great value. If you're already a member of both, remember to take the \$30 credit when you renew. Use the code PALA to get the discount.

Joining IBPA has its own benefits too. Here are just a few:

SUBSCRIPTION TO INDEPENDENT

IBPA's *Independent* magazine, included free as part of your annual membership fee, is your monthly passport to all things indie publishing and is consistently rated as IBPA members' number one benefit.

See more details [here](#).

FEDEX DISCOUNTS

IBPA members save on [FedEx Office](#) services through the IBPA Shipping Program, managed by [PartnerShip!](#) The benefits include a 20 percent discount on select black and white and color print and copy services and 10 a percent discount on signs, graphics, and select finishing services.

Find out more [here](#).

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

The PALA Listserv is a private group where PALA members and guests can ask questions and share news, resources, and information. It's a great way to access the vast knowledge and experience shared by our diverse group.

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.

VISIT THE NEW PALA ONLINE

Have you visited the new PALA website? The redesigned [members-only page](#) of PALA's website is user friendly and bursting with useful information—from transcripts of past meetings to upcoming events you won't want to miss.

If you have any questions or suggestions, feel free to contact Sharon Goldinger, pplspeak@att.net.



NEW FORMAT FOR MEETING TRANSCRIPTS

PALA's meeting transcripts are a great resource, whether you missed a meeting or attended but can't quite remember that one key point the speaker made. We know everyone loves to have access to the transcripts, but we also received feedback that an excerpt of the tran-

script in the newsletter and a link to the full transcript would be useful to some members.

This is the second newsletter with the new transcript, and we hope you're enjoying it! As always, please share your feedback and ideas for improvement.

MEETING TRANSCRIPT: APRIL 23, 2014

“NEW TOOLS TO SELL BOOKS” CARLA KING

Here is a brief excerpt from guest speaker Carla King's talk on tools for selling books.

Click [here](#) to read the full transcript, which includes lots of examples from Carla as well as audience questions like the following:

- What e-book file formats do I need to use these services, and how do I get them?
- Do I need a different ISBN for every different format?
- Can I compile articles I've written for different magazines into a collection and publish it as a new book using one of these services?

SG: Carla King is an adventure travel journalist, web professional, author, and self-publishing expert. In 1995 she pioneered the art of the real-time online travelogue with her American Borders dispatches, now called blog posts, sent from the saddle of the Russian Ural sidecar motorcycle she was testing for an American importer.

She's published seven books, including the Self-Publishing Boot Camp Guide for Authors and How to Self-Publish Your Book. Carla's going to tell us all about publishing tools to sell your books.

CK: Thank you, Sharon. And thank you, all. I'm really fascinated to be in the presence of the small press, as well as authors, because I've always talked with authors and because I came from a writer perspective. . . . I'm a do-it-yourself kind of gal. . . .

A lot of these tools that I'm going to tell you about are actually aimed at small presses as well as to the self-published author, whether they just published one book or ten books. . . .

I'm an adventure travel writer, and I think that writing, and the writing process, is a grand adventure. The publishing process is a crazy adventure because you have to start all over. It's like going to a new country and learning a new language. It doesn't stop when you learn the language. It all starts all over again, right? The new technology and the tools have evolved. And the good news is . . . I've just seen it get easier and easier. . . .

So, let me get to the new tools that—whether you're a one-book author or a ten-book author or a small press who wants to grow your author base—will help you sell more books and boost your platform, or help you boost your authors' platforms as well. . . .

I'm going to go over this in four parts:

1. The tools that help you sell more books
2. The tools that help you make money by crowd funding your books in advance, and your work, making money proposing to the public that they might buy your book
3. Creating subscription-based books in slices
4. Then updated information about tools you may have already heard of and maybe have used

What's exciting is that a lot of these tool makers have been around for a long
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“New Tools” (cont’d from page 3)

time. I think the ones that were going to fail have failed, and now the people who have been in the self-publishing industry, small press services industry, have been stable for a while. In 2008, Smashwords was super new, right? . . . And they’re going strong. So there are a lot of companies like that who are leaders and who are evolving and who are now the old publishers in the neighborhood.

So, the tools that help you sell more books, right now, are Selz, Gumroad, Liberio, IngramSpark, O’Reilly Atlas, and BitLit. So these are things you can do right now.

Selz is a way to sell your book on your website to your customers directly, without them leaving your website. This is not PayPal. . . . Selz is this cool little widget, and you can put your book cover and the “buy now” directly on your website. The user gets this experience: The background of your website kind of fades away into the dark, and the book cover gets all highlighted and sparkly and nice, and the customer says, “Buy it now” . . . and this little book widget gracefully turns around, just flips over like the queen’s wave and asks for the credit card number. It’s very friendly. . . . The user doesn’t get jarred by having to go to Amazon or B&N or the horrible blank PayPal screen.

It’s been shown that 50 percent of buyers drop off when they have to leave the website to buy a product. And this is so dead easy. I believe they take a very reasonable amount. Something like 8 percent and a 15-cent transaction fee, and it’s a no-brainer. You can do this tomorrow; you’ll be done with it in about half an hour.

The other one is Gumroad. I love this little store. . . . You can sell your books or your music or your coffee cups or your T-shirts or your pens or whatever, your software, your game, directly to your readers. . . . You can sell a physical book or automatically sell an EPUB or a PDF, a digital file, a MOBI file for Amazon, for instance. They take . . . only 5 percent and a 25-cent transaction fee. So it’s

better if you don’t have a 99-cent product, right? Like with Selz, you keep your customer data . . . “transactional social media.” . . .

Liberio. Those of you with books now, you can go to the [Liberio’s website](#) tonight and just upload your EPUB and/or the PDF of your book, that you’ve already created using Lightning Source or CreateSpace or IngramSpark, or whatever you’ve done. Microsoft Word, you know, will print to PDF. Anything will print to PDF. And Liberio is an indie-only bookstore, which means indie authors and small presses.

Now, that said, Liberio vets their books, so if your book doesn’t look professional or if it’s badly edited, you will not get into Liberio. So this is important. And this is of course what makes your book stand out and compete in the general marketplace. It’s a professionally designed cover, good editing, a copyright page. . . .

So, you’ve all heard of Ingram, right? . . . IngramSpark is Ingram’s answer for self-publishers, Ingram’s self-publishing tool. They don’t want you to go to Lightning Source anymore. . . .

The great thing about IngramSpark is—unlike CreateSpace—they do both e-book and print. With Amazon, you have to go to CreateSpace for your print book creation and distribution, and you have to go to Kindle Direct Publishing for your e-book creation and distribution. With IngramSpark, it’s all in one dashboard. . . . I would urge you to go use them now, and create an account. . . .

O’Reilly—this is for those of you who have a small press, not for the self-publisher. O’Reilly is the big computer book company. They have a new product. . . . I have been waiting so long for this to come out. . . . I think what happened is they were awaiting perfection, and so finally, I guess it’s perfect. So O’Reilly Atlas has happened.

With O’Reilly Atlas, you can . . . work with a whole host of professionals, and

everyone can work on the same file, and you can see who did what when, and you can revert, etc. . . . If you want to see the cutting edge of publishing, you should look at it.

One of the wonderful things about it is that it allows you to create a multimedia book all in one step with a print book, and when the print version gets created, the interactive, multimedia elements default to an image. So, these are two or three separate processes in a self-publishers world, but now they’ve created a very wonderful engine with a learning curve.

BitLit. Now how many of you have print books that are out there and published before the e-book revolution came along? . . . What you do is you sign up with BitLit. . . . It allows readers to download an e-book version of your print book. Now, you can sell it to them, or you can give it away. . . .

The other services I’m talking about are below that radar. So you can—in addition to having global distribution—use these more minor distribution channels that will reach people who don’t shop in those stores. And you can do it all! There’s no conflict. . . .

Okay, subscriptions and slicing. Who’s heard of Leanpub? Who’s heard of PressBooks? Slicebooks?

Leanpub is a company that started publishing conveyor books. And they’ve created this iterative publishing system because programmers didn’t care if the book was perfect. . . . They needed that information so badly that they would buy it for \$2, \$5, \$10, \$20 to read it as it was being written. So every time the author updated the book, added a chapter, made a correction, Leanpub e-mailed all the buyers and said, “There’s an update.” Now, eventually, Leanpub discovered that other people wanted that too. . . .

PressBooks is a publishing system—a book publishing system—that is based on the free and open source WordPress blogging software. . . . For under \$100,

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“New Tools” (cont’d from page 4)

you can create PDF for print, EPUB and MOBI, and web books, in HTML. . . . I told PressBooks to grab all of the XML code, to make it easier, from my category of wine country and make it a book. . . . And, within five minutes, I had a booklet that I called *Motorcycling in Wine Country in Northern California*. . . .

Who’s heard of Pubslush? It’s Kickstarter for books. It’s just books. . . . For small presses, they have a publisher area. You can help your authors crowd fund. You can crowd fund for your authors, and if your authors don’t make it, you know. You can test them out before you publish them.

As a small press, you might have ten authors that you’re thinking about publishing. Or five. And you think, “Well, I’m really sure about this one and this one. These three, I’d love to, but I’m not sure there’s an audience.” So, together with them, you can agree on how much money you need and they need, and create a crowd funding campaign around that and see if it flies.

Inkshares and Unbound. . . . They are publishers who always crowd fund their authors. So, I, as an author, would approach Inkshares. . . . And they would either say “good idea” or no. If they said “good idea,” then they would also—together with you—craft a crowd funding campaign. If the goal was met, they would publish you. You would get 50 percent, and they would get 50 percent. . . .

Beacon. If you’re a travel writer or a journalist, [Beacon](#) has a funding engine as well, and your fans can follow you on that platform. Right now, they only fund and work with journalists and travel writers. . . . You create your project or your series of articles on their platform only. Readers pay \$5 to get to you, but they also can read everyone else on Beacon. It’s another way to crowd fund. . . . You also get your e-mail list. . . .

Aerbook Maker is an automatic multimedia, beautiful, art book maker. . . . You create text boxes, and you slap images in.

It publishes on iBooks and Kindle Fire, and they’ve got automatic sharing with all your social media elements. Your readers or potential readers can find out about your book on Facebook from one of their friends, and they can preview the book without leaving their social media environment. They’ll say “buy,” and they’ll go to PayPal. So they can actually look without interrupting their Facebook time. . . .

Scribd is a social document-sharing site that publishes books. You can upload your PDF for sale or for free. It’s just like DocuShare, but the people at Scribd have made their focus publishing books, and they’ve attracted a lot of big publishers. If you’re a publisher, you can put your books on Scribd. They also have a subscription program for their readers. It’s the Netflix model for books. So for \$8.99 a month, I can read any book on Scribd that is in that program. . . . I make more money through that program than I did selling my books one by one on Scribd. . . .

People can follow you and can comment on your books. It’s another good place to get beta readers. I had 87,000 people following me on Scribd. I had 87,000 reads on one of my books. . . .

And finally, Vook’s author control dashboard. Vook is really smart. They’re the ones who are the distribution service. So, you upload your books to Vook, and they will distribute them through the Ingram network and elsewhere. . . . They created an author control dashboard. So you go and enter up to ten ISBN numbers. . . . And they have figured out how to grab the data and tell me how many books sold today, last week, in the year, forever.

To read the full transcript of Carla’s presentation, click [here](#).

RECORDINGS OF PAST MEETINGS

If you missed a meeting or need to hear the information again, we have recorded each of our meetings in MP3 format.

If you would like to receive a copy via e-mail, please contact Gary Young (artsy12@earthlink.net) with the subject line: PALA RECORDING.

Please indicate which *date* AND *program* in your e-mail. He will get back to you with the simple procedure.

PALA OFFICERS AND BOARD

Your PALA officers and chairs are

President: Gary Young, artsy12@earthlink.net

Vice President/Membership Chair:
Sharon Goldinger, pplspeak@att.net,
949-581-6190

Secretary: Robin Quinn, quinnrobin@aol.com

Treasurer: David Evans,
teddytravelerbear@earthlink.net

