

The Book of YOU

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How to sell yourself by writing a book

Why should a sales manager write a book? For one thing, **everybody has something of value to share with others. Books are about sharing ideas and wisdom.** If Jack Canfield and Harvey Mackay can do it, who's to say you don't have it in you to inspire millions of people?

Second, **a book can be a great way to push your career to the next level.** A book can get you speaking engagements and consulting assignments. A book can expand your customer base. A book can get you on radio and television shows. Take Roger Dow, for example. When he was still vice president and general sales manager of Marriott Hotels, he published *Turned On: Eight Vital Insights to Energize Your People, Customers, and Profits* (Collins, 1997). As Marriott's emissary, Dow went on speaking tours and got tremendous publicity for his book, himself, and the company. Another example: Dr. Herb Greenberg, founder, president, and CEO of the international consulting firm, Caliper, and his vice president, Patrick Sweeney. Last year, their book, *Succeed on Your Own Terms* (McGraw-Hill, 2006) hit at least five best-seller lists, including the *New York Times* advice/how-to list and the *Wall Street Journal* nonfiction list.

In short, **a book has the power to transform business professionals into their own brands. A book is a sign that you're a leading expert in your field.** In the minds of television producers, magazine editors, and potential customers, authors are people worth listening to.

And a book can be defined as just about anything written on a page. A two-page PDF you send to a prospect. A 20-page, spiral bound presentation for a client. Or a hardcover, 150-page self-published tome. **Published materials are take-aways that say more than a business card.** Think of them as promotional tools and opportunities to enlighten your customers and prospects about you and your product or service.

Rick Frishman, president of Planned Television Arts, understands the power of the book like no one else. With 30 years of experience in publicity, Frishman works with all the top agents, editors, and publishing houses—to say nothing of his top-dog client list, which includes Stephen King, Caroline Kennedy, Jimmy Carter, Mark Victor Hansen, Hugh Downs, Henry Kissinger, Jack Canfield, Alan Dershowitz, Arnold Palmer, and Harvey Mackay.

It's no surprise, then, that Frishman has become his own best-selling author: he has co-written eight books, including *Guerrilla Marketing for Writers* (Writers Digest Books, 2000), *Guerrilla Publicity* (Adams Media Corporation, 2002), and his *Author 101* series (Adams Publishing Group). Frishman is zealous and energetic about the possibilities of publishing, but he doesn't sugarcoat how difficult it is to write and publish a book, much less one that catches Oprah's eye.

One of his many tips? Carry a camera (or your book, if you've already published one) with you at all times. On his website, Frishman has posted photos of himself posing with major celebrities. There's Frishman with Larry King, Harvey

Mackay, Oprah Winfrey, Howard Stern, James Earl Jones, and Al Gore. The Frishman Collection of Celebrity Photos is not about vanity, nor is it purely an endorsement. It's a testament to his philosophy of promotion. You never know who you're going to meet.

Frishman reveals the inner workings of the publishing world and how a book can help you stand out from the crowd:

Q: How much do publishers pay an author to write a book?

A: Here's how the money part works. An advance is what they pay you to write the book. After the book is published, your job is to earn out that advance, meaning that if the publisher gave you \$10,000 up front, you've got to sell enough to earn back that \$10,000.

Q: What happens after you earn back the advance?

A: After that, you start getting royalty checks, which is really cool. My favorite two words in the English language are "passive income." Once you've earned out your advance, you've become a good author for your publisher.

Q: How much is a typical advance?

A: If you're a first-time author and you don't have a big platform, a typical advance could be \$10,000. That doesn't mean some people haven't gotten \$200,000 and lots have gotten \$3,000. If you have an infomercial and you're famous, you could get \$100,000. But a small advance is probably a good thing for most authors. If you get a really big advance, it will be hard to earn it back. I hear stories all the time about people who've gotten big advances, and then their book bombs. Then the books come back from the bookstores, because the publisher printed too many.

Q: Bookstores can send unsold books back to the publisher?

A: Publishing is a backwards business. Books aren't sold until they're sold. The 50,000 books that are in bookstores are on consignment. If they don't sell, 48,000 of them could go straight back to the publisher. The publishers don't want to print a bunch of copies and then get a lot of returns.

Q: Do publishers want to read the whole book before they buy it?

A: You don't have to be a great writer to be an author. Up to 70 percent of most nonfiction books use ghostwriters who help write the book. Publishers don't expect you to be a brilliant writer, they expect you to have brilliant content. You have to have something to teach and to sell. Fiction is a horse of a different color. With fiction, you have to know how to write. And generally, they won't buy it without reading the whole thing first.

To sell nonfiction, however, all you need is a book proposal. That's the great news, because a proposal is not the same as writing the whole book. You give sample chapters, and you describe what type of marketing plan you'll do when the book comes out. You also include the research you've done on the industry you're writing about. And you explain your platform.

Q: What's a platform?

A: A platform is what qualifies you to write a book. It's what's going to make your book different and unique. Don't say, "This is the only book that's ever going to be like this." Baloney. You want to look at the books that are already out there and explain why yours is better and different. There are 195,000 books published a

year, according to the American Booksellers Association. What do you do to make yours jump?

What you want to do is tell publishers how big a herd you have. Don't say, "I will be on *Oprah* because my uncle's brothers' cousin is a friend. You ain't getting on the *Today* show, probably. How many people subscribe to your newsletter? How many television shows have you been on? What other books have you published? What are you really going to do to promote your book?

Q: What happens after the book is published?

A: When a book is published, it's the calm before the calm. Their book comes out, and the authors expect they're going to be on *Oprah* and that the publisher will throw a huge party for them, and the *New York Times* will review it, and they'll sell 10,000 books. And none of that happens. It's a letdown.

First-time authors especially don't get that kind of promotion. If you've been an author with a publisher before and your book has been successful, they'll do more for you. You have to be a brand, a known quantity. Typically if a publisher has 100 books coming out in a season, they devote 80 percent of their resources to the top 20 percent. They'll send your book to reviewers and specialty magazines and radio shows. But generally they'll only follow up for about two or three months after the publication date. Six to eight weeks, maybe. Then they move on. Sometimes when a book takes off unexpectedly, they throw some action at it. But they just don't have the resources to do that for every book. So don't depend on your publisher to promote the book for you. If they do, it's wonderful, it's fantastic! If they do it, love them and enjoy it.

Q: What can authors do to promote on their own?

A: Promotion is a never-ending process. **You should be promoting all the time.** This doesn't stop after three months. You should be doing radio all the time. You need to have a fantastic Website, even before you get an agent. The minute you start thinking of book titles, reserve the URLs. You don't want to have a title and then realize that someone else has the URL. Then you have to build a site.

The most important lesson in promotion is to do anything and everything you can. No show is too small. No interview is too small. I don't care if you're on at 3:00 in the morning, if there are 10 people listening. They may tell 10 people about what they heard. The point is, you never know who is listening and watching.

Q: What would you say to someone who's thinking about writing a book?

A: You've got to nurture your career. **A book is a tool to catapult you.** It's a wonderful beginning step because a book is something that lives beyond you. **By writing a book, you can do something good in the world. You can give back and teach.** I'm trying to teach people to become teachers.

Sidebar: Self-Publishing Primer

Nowadays you don't need a powerhouse agent or publishing house to print a book. If you're interested in hopping on the publish-on-demand (POD) bandwagon, check out the resources listed below. Some self-publishing sites (like Lulu.com) are plain and basic, and can have you published and running in no time. Others offer complex packages for design, marketing, editing, and publicity services (including iUniverse, which is operated by Barnes & Noble, and Booksurge, which is backed by Amazon.com). Some charge hefty upfront fees; check out their complimentary self-

publishing guides to avoid getting burned. Also, be clear on what type of book you're hoping to produce. A promotional booklet, for example, will require far less work than a 200-page hardcover book.

Online Self-Publishing Services:

Self-Publishing.com

Booksurge.com

Xlibris.com

LightningSource.com

Sidebar: Resources

Books about Self-Publishing and Book Promotion

How to Publish and Promote Online, M.J. Rose and Angela Hoy, St. Martin's Griffin, 2001

Buzz Your Book, M.J. Rose and Doug Glegg, Pigeonhole Press, 2001, available as a PDF download

Publicize Your Book, Jacqueline Duval, Perigree, 2003

The Self-Publishing Manual: How to Write, Print, and Sell Your Own Book, Dan Poynter, Para Publishing, 2006

Author 101: Bestselling Book Publicity: The Insider's Guide to Promoting Your Book – And Yourself, Rick Frishman, Robyn Spizman, and Mark Steisel, Adams Publishing Group, 2006