



Selling Your Books Up Close and Personal

by SLPA Vice President Cherie Postill

Hand selling your books is profitable and effective. Authors need readers; they need to sell books. With the myriad of options available to book buyers, including the plethora of online stores, multiple social media networks, and independent bookstores, authors have numerous opportunities to get their readers' attention and sell books. In-person book-selling events should be high on your list.



Cherie Postill

Why? To sell books. If there were no other reason, this would be enough. Readers that meet you (the author) are more likely to purchase, read and review your book. And

7 pm, June 14
via ZOOM

readers are the only people with the power to make your book a bestseller. Word of mouth is the most reliable salesperson you could never afford to hire and the best advertising you can't buy. But it requires you to get your book into the hands of your ideal readers. Selling in person is a perfect way to accomplish this.

You can also collect valuable marketing data at live events that will help you sell more books in the future. The personal connections forged build confidence, making

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Join us on June 14 for "The Profitable Way: Hand-Selling Your Books to Build Your Business," featuring writer, marketing professional, and SLPA Vice President Cherie Postill.

Cheri Postill is the author of How to Train a Beta Reader and Sell More Books, a nonfiction guide for writers. Her debut fiction novel, Cory Summers and the Wrath of Naytas, scheduled for publication in spring of 2023, was born out of a story she has been telling her boys and their friends before bedtime, around campfires, and at sleep-over parties for over 25 years. Her humor/adventure novel, Mediocre – Mayhem at the Middle School, is targeted for release in the summer of 2023. Connect with her at clpostill.com or cherie@clpostill.com.

SLPA Authors Summer Series

Apply to win one of three evenings in our summer series for authors at Spine Indie Bookstore & Café! Don't miss your chance to host an author event with promotion from the St. Louis Publishers Association, including offer giveaways to attendees. Up to three authors may be featured each night. Winners will be selected based on the strength of the submitted application.

Event dates are **July 10, August 14, and September 18**. This opportunity is available to SLPA members only. For more information, visit: <https://www.stlouispublishers.org/event-5314579>.



Publishing Short Stories

by Brad R. Cook

Join the St. Louis Publishers Association on July 12 for "Publishing Short Stories," featuring author and historian Brad R. Cook.

What do you do when the book is only 3,000 to 5,000 words? There are many roads to take with a short story from journals, to contests, anthologies, and more, but have you published them? Find out what road works best for you and learn why I not only publish them, but print them and sell them just like a book.

Brad R. Cook is the author of historical fantasy, and award-winning short stories. He began as a



Brad R. Cook

playwright, dipped into the corporate writing world, and served as co-publisher and acquisitions editor for Blank Slate Press. He currently serves as historian of St. Louis Writers Guild after three and a half years as president. He learned to fence at thirteen and never set down his sword, but prefers to curl up with a centuries' old classic. Visit bradcook.com and @bradcook on social media.

ZOOM (new as of 5/24/23):

Sign-up is free. Join from your smart-phone, computer, or tablet. If it's your first time, follow the prompts and allow it to access your camera and microphone. Use this link for the meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/94227448734>.

Meeting ID is 942 2744 8734. Passcode is 563402.

UPCOMING EVENTS

via ZOOM

June 14, 7:00 – 8:30pm

The Profitable Way: Hand-Selling Your Books to Build Your Business

with Cherie Postill

<https://zoom.us/j/94227448734>

July 10, 6:30 – 8:30pm

SLPA Authors Summer Series
Spine Indie Bookstore & Café
1976 Arsenal St., St. Louis, MO 63118

<https://www.stlouispublishers.org/event-5314579>

July 12, 7:00 – 8:30pm

Publishing Short Stories

with Brad R. Cook

<https://zoom.us/j/94227448734>

readers more willing to sign up for your newsletter and provide their contact information which you will add to your growing email list. If you don't have a newsletter, no worries. There are other ways to get the priceless information you need. For instance, you can raffle off one of your books; the winner will get an email with congratulations and an estimated delivery date.

You will earn higher profits by hand-selling. Your profit margins are considerably higher when you eliminate the middleman. You also have the chance to sell multiple books and give away bookmarks or other printed "freebies" to remind your reader to visit your site, look for your next book, or encourage them to comment on your blog. Every opportunity to engage with readers is a win for an author.

At in-person events, you get to know your readers and receive immediate and timely feedback. This is where you get more than the average 2.5 seconds of their attention, and in most cases, your competition is

exponentially lower. You will know immediately if your pitch hooked them — or not. If not, you can work on perfecting your pitch based on their feedback, i.e., book sales. Find out what they are currently reading. What are they looking for, and WHERE are they looking? The answers inform your marketing decisions and your writing choices.

Standing out in the crowded book market is challenging. There are thousands of authors selling books and millions of books for sale. The good news is that you are in good company and demand is strong for your product. No matter how many books are published, there will ALWAYS be room for yours because books are consumable; the minute your potential reader finishes a book, they are looking for the next one. Make sure yours is an option. Invest the time it takes to learn how to hand-sell your books. The return is worth the effort. Give hand-selling a try at the next local event in your area and soon you will be on your way to building a loyal fan base.



It's time for you to move, realizing that the thing you are seeking is also seeking you.

Iyanla Vanzant

Keep a small can of WD-40 on your desk—away from any open flames—to remind yourself that if you don't write daily, you will get rusty.

—George Singleton



Meetings on the second Wednesday of every month

In-person gatherings are suspended due to COVID-19 concerns. All meetings will be held online until further notice.

Admission and Membership

- Monthly meetings on Zoom are FREE
- Membership is \$60 per year.

Visit: stlouispublishers.org/join
stlouispublishers.org/benefits

SLPA NEWS & VIEWS

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LAST MONTH'S RECAP Partnering With the Public Library to Promote Your Book



Special thanks to **Jennifer Alexander, Collection Development Specialist for St. Louis County Library (SLCL)**, for sharing the latest updates on how the SLCL acquires books post-pandemic, and specifically how that affects authors in the bi-state region since the St. Louis Public Library and St. Louis County Library merged their catalogs in 2022.



Jennifer Alexander

How books are added / removed from collection

Books are added in response to reader requests, long waiting lists, reviews in professional journals, promotion by publishers, and repurchasing older books with high demand. Books are removed due to physical wear and tear, low circulation, replaced by newer editions, and need of more shelf space.

How do librarians choose?

Every library is different. Policies reflect institutional values, but can change over time. Patron use is the most powerful influence on the library's collection (requests, circulation, hold levels, diverse viewpoints).

Practical Considerations

Books should be published according to industry standards with professional quality,

using acceptable vendors like Baker & Taylor, Ingram, Midwest Library Services, and local bookstores (publishing solely through KDP is not accepted).

What's changed since 2020? Everything!

First-time ebook users became ardent fans, causing a major budget shift from print to ebooks; in fact, circulation across all other formats is down. The publishing industry didn't experience the same downturns as other segments of the economy. Covid shut-downs helped fuel the growth of BookTok (recommendations on TikTok).

Where do recommendations come from?

Bestseller lists don't have as much influence (the same books often remain for years), and coverage in magazines and newspapers continues to decline. Influence has increased from podcasts and websites like BookRiot, The Millions, Goodreads; popular celebrity book clubs; BookTok; and the Colleen Hoover phenomenon. Personal recommendations are still the most reliable.

How can the library help authors?

The public library is a place for enthusiastic readers of all types of books. Use all the resources available to help with writing and publishing, including: Indie Author Project, EBSCO eBooks, Gale Courses, LearningExpress Library, and Lynda.com.