



News & Views

▶ Empowering authors and publishers to create and market books

MAY 2011

May 11 meeting at Brentwood Community Center Tell me more: Creating interest in your book with everyone you meet

You've published your book. It's awesome. The world needs to know about it. But did you know that everyday thousands of potential buyers slip past you unnoticed? Come to this dynamic program to see how you can promote your book in a natural way so that it is intriguing to the people you encounter and the 250 others in their network. You'll walk away with practical ideas you can apply right away.

Our Speaker:



Steve Hughes is the President of Hit Your Stride, LLC, a communications consultancy that helps people look and sound smart when they talk. His seminars have been featured on NPR and BBC Radio and his first book *Better Faster Speaker* will be published in August. Today he works with a host of blue-chip clients including MetLife, Boeing, Deloitte, the American

Marketing Association, and the Illinois Bar. Prior to launching Hit Your Stride, Steve spent 12 years in advertising and public relations—most recently he was a co-owner at a 40-person advertising agency in Clayton. Steve holds a BA in French Literature and European History from the University of Kansas and an MBA in Marketing from Washington University, where he was awarded the prestigious Olin Cup.

SLPA meets on the second Wednesday of the month at: Brentwood Community Center 2505 S. Brentwood Boulevard, Brentwood, MO 63144

Doors open for networking at 6:30 P.M. and meeting begins at 7:00 P.M. The formal meeting concludes at about 8:30 with networking continuing after the meeting.

Our regular meetings are free to Members.
Guests - \$10.00 at the door, cash or check only.

Publishing University Scholarship Awarded

We are pleased to announce that St. Louis Publishers Association member **Steven Hayman, E.D.D.** is the recipient of the scholarship to attend Publishing University, to be held in New York City, May 22-23, 2011. Sponsored by the Independent Book Publishers Association, Publishing University is designed to provide publishers with experts' insights into the industry's future as well as hands-on solutions for new and growing companies.

Steven is the President of Greater Insight Publishing, and has published two books to date. He is looking forward to learning more about the publishing industry through attending Publishing University. Steven will share his experiences with the St. Louis Publishers Association when he returns.

What's ahead?

June 8 - You can write, but can you communicate?

Writing a book is a wonderful accomplishment, but you must also know how communicate to others the essence of your book. Whether you are speaking to a friend or talking to a crowd, these tips will help you polish your presentation.

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Craft an exceptional elevator pitch

by Penny C. Sansevieri



What is an elevator pitch and why do you need one? An elevator pitch is a short one-to-two-sentence description about your book. It's the briefest of the briefest descriptions you can develop. The reason elevator pitches are important is that we have an ever-shrinking attention span, so you need to capture someone's attention in a very short, succinct pitch.

How do you begin crafting an elevator pitch? The first step is to look at the core of your book. What is your book about, really? Looking at the core of your book will help you determine the primary message. The next step is to look at the real benefits to the reader. Not what you think the reader wants to know but what they actually need: What's in it for the reader?

When I worked with people on elevator pitches, I found that they often kept the best sentence for last. This comes from being an author and saving the crescendo of the story until the final chapter. You don't want to do that in an elevator pitch. You want to lead with the tease that will pull the reader in.

When would you use an elevator pitch? You might use it to promote yourself to the media, to book a speaking event, or to pitch a blogger. Elevator pitches can be used for a number of reasons and in a variety of ways. Once you create a great elevator pitch, you may find yourself using it over and over again. That's a good thing!

Components of a Great Elevator Pitch

All elevator pitches have particular relevance to them, but for the most part, every elevator pitch must:

- Have emotional appeal
- Be helpful
- Be insightful
- Be timely
- Matter to your reader!

Essential Elements of a Powerful Elevator Pitch

- **Concise:** Your pitch needs to be short, sweet, and to the point.
- **Clear:** Save your five dollar words for another time. For your elevator pitch to be effective, you must use simple language any layperson can understand. If you make someone think about a word, you'll lose them and the effectiveness of your elevator pitch will go right out the window as well.
- **Passion:** If you're not passionate about your topic, how can you expect anyone else to be?

- **Visual:** Use words that bring visual elements to your reader's mind. It helps to make your message more memorable and brings the reader into your story.
- **Stories:** People love stories. It's the biggest element of the elevator pitch: tell the story. I also find that when the pitch is woven into the story, it often helps to create a smoother presentation.

How to Craft Your Killer Elevator Pitch

- **Write it down:** Start by writing a very short story so you can tell the story of your book in two paragraphs. This will get the juices flowing. As you start to edit your story down from 200,000 words to two paragraphs, you'll start to see why it's important to pull only the most essential elements from your story to craft your elevator pitch.
- **Make a list:** Write down 10 to 20 things that your book does for the reader. These can be action statements, benefits, or book objectives.
- **Record yourself:** Next, record yourself and see how you sound. I can almost guarantee that you will not like the first few drafts you try. That actually is a really good thing. If you like the first thing that you write, it probably won't be that effective. Recording yourself will help you listen to what you're saying and figure out how to fine-tune it.
- **Rest:** I highly recommend that you give yourself enough time to do your elevator pitch. Ideally you want to let it rest overnight, if not longer. Remember the elevator pitch is perhaps the most important thing that you created in your marketing package. You want to make sure it's right.

Having a prepared "pitch" for your book will help you enormously, whether you are pitching the media, an agent, a publisher, or even a bookstore. Having a short, concise pitch will get and keep someone's attention and also, increase your chances for a positive desired outcome. Keep in mind that if your elevator pitch is tied to current events, it might change as events change. A good elevator pitch can be fluid, but it should always be an attention grabber. In a world cluttered with information and filled with noise, the shorter and more focused you can be, the more exposure you will get for your message! 📖

Penny C. Sansevieri is an author and an Adjunct Instructor at NYU. She formed Author Marketing Experts, a full service marketing and publicity firm, to help authors successfully sell their books. Her website is www.authormarketingexperts.com.

27 things you can do to promote your book: Before you write it, before you launch it, and after you've published it



by Sue Collier

I'm fond of telling authors that after they've written their book, the hard work begins—and by that I am referring to marketing and promoting. In reality, though, your book promotion plans should begin well before you start writing the book. In this post, I've listed those things you

can do before you start writing, before you launch, and after you've published. Follow this list, and you should be on your way to developing a solid author platform—and selling more books.

Before you write it

1. Have a unique approach to a relevant topic. There are a lot of books published every year. Make sure yours stands out from the crowd for the right reasons.

2. Decide why you are writing a book. To make money? To establish expertise? To see yourself in print? All are valid reasons that may impact how you publish as well as market the book.

3. Make sure you have an audience for the book. And make sure you know how to reach them. If you plan to market strictly online and your audience is made up of non-Internet savvy readers, you may have a problem.

4. Build a following via social media sites. It's never too early to start making connections with potential readers and relevant professionals via social media. There are many sites out there, but Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn are the most common. You may also want to check out websites such as book marketing expert John Kremer's Book Marketing Network.

Before you launch it

5. Create a website that features your (forthcoming) book. This one is a no-brainer.

6. Start building your email list. Publish an ezine and offer a free report, free chapter, or some other bonus for people to opt-in with. When you attend events, collect business cards and email addresses. Send them an email or a copy of your ezine, and invite them to opt-in.

7. Start blogging. This is the best way to keep your website content fresh. It's also a great way to stay in touch with potential readers and professionals within your industry. You can also use it to establish your credibility well before your book is published.

8. Use your blog to ask for feedback on your book's content. Then promise to acknowledge everyone who comments in your book. These people will feel an "ownership" in your book and will help spread the word after it launches.

9. Create a list of important bloggers in your field. Start interacting with them by commenting on their blogs.

10. Get testimonials and endorsements from pertinent people in your field. These are great promotional tools that can then go on the book cover and/or inside the book. Post them on your website and use them in news releases.

11. Approach associations relevant to your book's content. Suggest ways you can work together. Perhaps you can put on a workshop or seminar, speak at an event, or write an article for their newsletter or blog.

12. Set up Google alerts. Stay abreast of industry news by setting up an alert in your name, your competitors' names, and other key terms. This will enable you to jump into the online conversation in a timely manner.

13. Have your manuscript edited by a professional. Ensuring that your content is top-notch will go a long way in making your reputation is top-notch.

14. Have your book cover designed by a professional. Don't skimp on this very important sales tool. A professional book cover designer will ensure your book stands proudly next to any other book on the shelf.

15. Create your own competition. Create a competition on your website or on Twitter (Tony Eldridge has written an excellent book on Twitter contests) with copies of the book as prizes. Follow up with those who entered but didn't win and offer them a discount to purchase your book.

16. Offer the book as a prize on other websites and blogs. You should have already put together a list of blogs and websites where your book could potentially be promoted. Offer the blogger or website owner free copies of your book to be used as competition prizes.

17. Send out free copies of the book. Don't skimp on this important aspect of promotions. It's a great way to garner reviews and endorsements. Send out copies to influential bloggers and journalists.

18. Pull out excerpts of the book to use as articles. Post them on free article sites that are available all over the Internet.

Continued next page

27 things you can do ... *continued*

19. Create and post videos. Keep videos short and sweet (under 10 minutes) and publish on YouTube and your own website, as well as other sites.

20. Schedule a launch day. Pick one specific day and make sure plenty of activity is planned around this day. Notify your email list, post some videos to YouTube, hold a webinar, plan some guest blog posts. All that activity should go a long way in creating momentum.

After you publish it

21. Offer a chapter as a downloadable PDF. Post one of your book's chapters on your website as a free, downloadable file. Encourage readers to share it with others. Include a summary of the rest of book to encourage people to buy it.

22. Publish the book's table of contents on your website. Include a brief overview about each chapter. Optimize the page for search engines.

23. Organize an online virtual book tour. Touring the country to physically visit bookstores is cost prohibitive for most authors—and not all that effective unless you are a celebrity. Arrange a tour online with virtual stops at websites and blogs. You'll gain maximum exposure for minimum costs.

24. Encourage people to write a review of your book on Amazon.com. Ask everyone who gets a copy of your book to publish a five-star review of your book on Amazon.

25. Publish reviews and testimonials of the book on your website. Include reviews from Amazon.com and other sites where your book has been reviewed, as well as any testimonials you've received.

26. Arrange interviews with bloggers in your genre and radio hosts interested in your subject matter. This is a win-win since it provides them with valuable content and you with valuable publicity. Include these as part of your virtual author book tour initially, but you can continue to schedule interviews even after your initial publication. As long as your book is for sale, the promotion push should be ongoing.

27. Make sure you always have copies of your book with you. I've had clients sell 20 or more copies out of their trunk or waiting in line at the post office. One author I know gave away a copy of his book to an executive, who ended up ordering dozens of copies for his company.

And don't stop with this list. There are dozens more things you can do to promote your book. Get creative, be persistent, and watch your book sales go up. 

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Book learning

"What will you take away from tonight's meeting?"

Members and guests of SLPA were asked this question following the April presentation *Beyond the blog*. Here's what a few folks had to say:



"I can promote myself technically. I can promote myself in many different ways. I am in control."
—Tim Hill



"There's a lot more work to do."
—Cathy Wood (left)

"Take one step at a time."
—Jill Droege (right)

A few helpful author/publisher websites

www.amarketingexpert.com

www.aprilhamilton.com

www.bookmarket.com

www.ibpa-online.org

www.independent-authors.org

www.parapublishing.com

www.spannet.org

www.stlouispublishers.org

www.thecreativepenn.com

www.TheSavvyBookMarketer.com

www.topbooksales.com 

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