



News & Views

▶ Helping authors and publishers create, market and sell more books

APRIL 2008

APRIL 9 MEMBERSHIP MEETING:

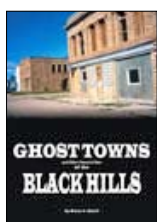
Planning Success into Your Book

Learn how to build your marketing into your book from the very beginning as we map the process of creating a book from original idea all the way to reaching the readers. Two fascinating authors and a marketing professional will share stories of how they lay the foundation for book sales while they're still producing their books and how to create demand for your books and products. They will share additional tips on how to repurpose your material to create additional sales opportunities.

You'll learn:

- Why you shouldn't wait till your book is completed to begin thinking about marketing
- Ways to pre-sell your books while you're still working on them
- How to create books and products that fill specific needs within your niche
- How to build relationships with your readers and retailers that keep them coming back for more.
- A realistic timeline for the successful launch of a book: including Planning • Production • Promotion

BRUCE A. RAISCH is a ghost town hunter, historian, photographer and outdoor adventurer. Five months out of the



year, he explores the west, researching his topic. He's the author of *Ghost Towns of Wyoming*, *Ghost Towns and Other Historical Sites of the Black Hills* and the just-released *Ghost Towns Of Idaho: The Search*

For *El Dorado*, which is his third book in a planned series of ten. Besides containing the history of numerous faded ghost towns, these books are loaded with photos and stories of misadventure by the author.

He will share tips on the different methods he uses for selling his books and how he builds relationships with his readers and retailers that keeps the coming back for more. For the third year in a row, he is doing a book signing on Mt. Rushmore during Memorial Day weekend. His activities and interests include: archeology, astronomy, camping, canoeing, canyoneering, extreme hiking, history, horseback riding, land navigation,

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER BY ED SYLVIA


More Bang for your Buck

Hello, SLPA Members! One of the points I like to stress when telling potential members about our organization is that their dollars will gain so much more value when they join. It is not because we have so much wisdom to offer—but that, as a group, we have made every possible mistake and blunder imaginable already. We exist so that others can avoid making the same blunders we did.

One of the biggest mistakes a new author can make is to write a book without a plan for selling it. That is exactly what happened with my first book. It was only when a delivery truck pulled up to my house with my printed books on wooden pallets that I realized my predicament. I, like many novice authors, was seduced by my own book—thinking “it will sell itself.” Six months later, I joined SLPA, but I had lost a lot valuable set-up time.

At our April 9 meeting, we are fortunate to have two wonderful, successful guest speakers, Katie Banister and Bruce Raisch, who will share their knowledge and experience in how to plan for the successful marketing of your title before and during the actual writing of the book. We will also have a brief discussion on a realistic timeline for the successful launch of a book, from planning through Production and to Promotion of the title.



So make this meeting part of your April schedule. It will be one sure-fire way to reverse the trend of your dollar's declining value! 

— Ed Sylvia, President
slpa1@staircasepress.com

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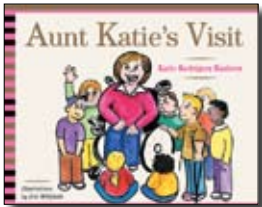
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Planning Success into Your Book... *continued*

mountain climbing, parachuting, parasailing, photography, rock climbing, Spelunking, steam train riding and white water rafting. He has managed to transform his interests into a fascinating career as an author. You can reach Bruce at his website:

www.theghosttownhunter.com

KATIE RODRIGUEZ BANISTER is a dynamic and humorous speaker, author, consultant, disability educator and president of Access-4-All, Inc. In 1990, Katie survived an auto accident that left her a quadriplegic, paralyzed from the chest down. After six months of rehabilitation and 15 months residing with her parents, she returned to living independently in 1992. Katie and her husband Steve co-founded Access-4-All, Inc., with a mission to educate and empower others through motivational speaking and disability education programs. Katie has authored *Aunt Katie's Visit*, an educational book for children, *The Personal Care Attendant Guide: The Art of Finding, Keeping or Being One*, and the forthcoming *A Pocket of Poems: And How To Write Your Own*. In addition to her books



and speaking programs, Katie is the creator of the Access-Sack™, which is a line of backpacks with style that can be used on wheelchairs or strollers.

Katie's many honors include 2001 St. Louis Woman of Achievement, Missouri Jaycees 1998 Ten Outstanding Young Missourians, 1995 Ten Outstanding Young St. Louisans Missouri Governor's Council on Disability 1993 Advocate of the Year, and Kirkwood, Missouri 1982 Junior Miss. You can reach Katie at her website: **www.access-4-all.com**

Join us Wednesday evening, April 9 for this informative and entertaining meeting at The Lodge at Des Peres.

Doors open for networking at 6:30 PM, meeting begins at 7:00 PM. The formal meeting concludes around 8:30 with networking continuing till 9:00 PM. For directions to the Lodge, visit our web site and click the link.

www.stlouispublishers.org 

Questions About SLPA?



Contact Membership Chairman:
Christine Frank at 314-205-2679 or
Assistant Membership Coordinator:
Linda Austin at 314-822-1170

FEATURE ARTICLE:

Cradle-to-Grave Marketing

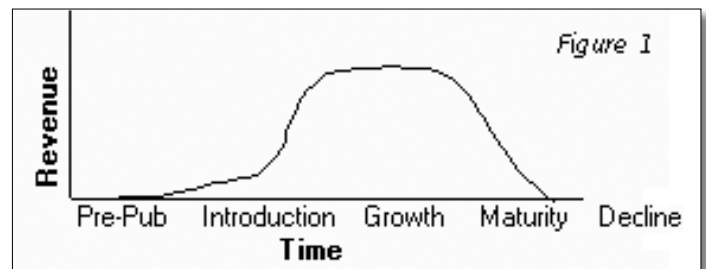
By Brian Jud

If you hold a magnifying glass over a flammable substance on the brightest day of the year, you will never start a fire—as long as you keep the glass moving. But when you concentrate the sun's energy on a specific point it will light immediately. Similarly, you will ignite your publishing business only when you focus your energy on your strengths, as you build a profitable product line upon your existing foundation.

Long-term, profitable growth does not come from introducing a disjointed series of new titles. Rather, it evolves by establishing expertise in one domain and publishing a succession of related titles. This can occur when you manage the life cycle of one title, expanding it into a cohesive, profitable product line.

MANAGING A TITLE'S LIFE CYCLE

The typical life cycle of a title is comprised of a series of six predetermined stages: Pre-publication, Introduction, Growth, Maturity, Decline and Demise. Figure 1 depicts this sequence as a title moves through its life.



The phases are defined by the amount of revenue and profitability generated by the title over time. Your job is to recognize when your title makes the transition from one stage to the next and take the appropriate steps to stimulate or maintain its growth. Unfortunately, this is difficult to determine because there is no clear indication when each stage begins or ends. Nor is there any assurance as to how long each one will last, and some titles move from Introduction to Decline with very short periods of Growth and Maturity.

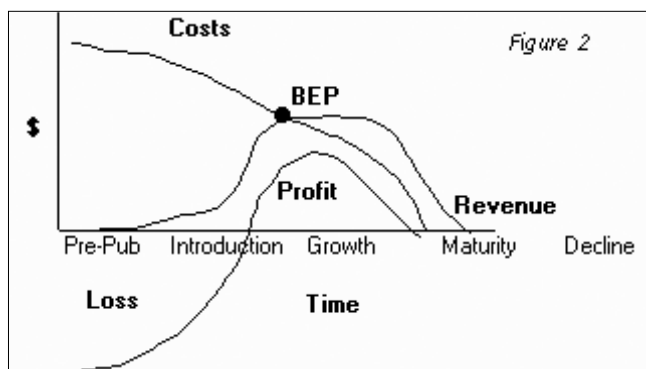
This concept is important to independent publishers because a title is generally not profitable until it is well into its Growth stage. There are steps you can take to shepherd a title through its infancy, past its break-even point (BEP – see Figure 2) and onward to a long and profitable Maturity.

Four scepters can help you shepherd your flock of products. These are your book, and the way you distribute, price and promote it. Success requires that you manipulate and apply these basic elements of marketing strategy. This may require the dexterity of a circus juggler because each title in your product line could be in a different life-cycle stage at any given time.

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Cradle-to-Grave Marketing *continued*

Fortunately, those in their later, profitable stages provide the funds to nurture growing titles. As Figure 2 demonstrates, a title's profitability is greatest during its Growth and Maturity phases. By the time these phases begin, the high costs of Introduction of have been covered. Therefore, the key to maintaining a high level of contribution is to sustain the point at which revenue and profitability are the greatest.



The following discussion describes strategies you can implement to reach the highest level of profitability and sustain it for as long as possible.

STAGE ONE: PRE-PUBLICATION

Overall strategy: Preparation. Initially, focus all your activity on product development and strategic planning as you coordinate your book's title, size, color, layout, cover design and printing.

Simultaneously, you must create your marketing plan, outlining how you will distribute, price and promote the title. Will you distribute to bookstores through the traditional channels or market directly to selective segments? Will you sell through book clubs or pursue serial and foreign rights? These decisions influence the price you will charge, which must also be decided before your books are printed.

Many promotional tactics are set in motion in the Pre-Publication period. Galleys are required by many book reviewers three to four months prior to the publication date. You must compose your press kit and send it to people at print and broadcast media. In addition, there are direct-mail campaigns to create, endorsements to be sought, book signings to arrange and myriad promotional events to plan.

STAGE TWO: INTRODUCTION

Overall strategy: Promotion. Once your book is published, the emphasis shifts almost completely to promotion, making people aware that your new title exists. Book sales begin to generate some revenue, but profits remain negligible because earnings are reinvested into your marketing juggernaut.

A utopian goal is to reach every prospective customer frequently enough to motivate him or her to buy your book. You can accomplish this with varying degrees of success by strategically implementing an assorted promotional mix, combining publicity with advertising, sales promotion and personal selling activities. Emphasize low-cost activities such as targeted appearances on television and radio shows combined with publicity events and networking with people in the print media.

STAGE THREE: GROWTH

Overall strategy: Penetration. Your initial focus on promotion will be rewarded as awareness and sales increase rapidly and the title reaches its Break Even Point (BEP—Figure 2). Rising profits provide an influx of income enabling you to attend more trade shows, conduct additional direct-mail campaigns or advertise in relevant publications. Market penetration becomes paramount as you attempt to persuade more potential customers to purchase your book, or if appropriate, convince previous buyers to acquire more copies.

During the Growth stage, there is no need to discount your price because people are willing to pay the full retail price. However, as your title enters its second printing, look for ways to increase profitability by lowering production costs. Revisit your distribution strategies to determine if it is time to address any special, direct markets that you decided not to address earlier.

STAGE FOUR: MATURITY

Overall strategy: Maintain. Eventually sales begin to level off as your title enters Maturity. Figure 2 demonstrates that the cost to maintain the market presence of your title decreases, and subsequently, profitability increases. It makes sense to nourish this cash cow and sustain its revenue stream for as long as possible.

As new competitors begin to appear, your marketing strategies should shift. Start by testing a different promotional mix, investigating new product opportunities, evaluating different distribution channels and considering alternative pricing incentives.

Below is a case history about the title *Job Search 101*, a book which describes how to plan and implement a comprehensive job search. This discussion presents five possible marketing strategies to apply that will help revitalize and sustain your title's earlier growth.

1. Create new markets.

Job Search 101 was published in 1991 and sold to bookstores and libraries via traditional distribution channels. As the economy worsened in the early 1990s, bookstore shelves became saturated with competitive job-search books. Incremental growth through conventional outlets became less profitable so a strategic marketing decision was created with the goal of seeking new markets.

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Cradle-to-Grave Marketing *continued*

For instance, research discovered an absence of career information available for the Hispanic market. Hence, *Job Search 101* was translated into Spanish and published as *Elementos basicos para buscar trabajo*. This required a new distribution network, one more knowledgeable in servicing a market unfamiliar to the publisher.

Ensuing investigation uncovered an opportunity for entering the college market. *Job Search 101* was sold to college career departments where students receive job-search assistance. These sales were invoiced at list price with no distributor discounts and no returns. Additional sales of *Job Search 101* were made to instructors of job-search courses who used it as a textbook. This also increased sales to college libraries.

2. Provide the information in a different format.

By focusing on the contents of your book instead of the book itself, you can deliver the generic information in different ways. For example, sales of *Job Search 101* began to slow down in the college market. Research among college students determined that they wanted job-search information in a more easy-to-use format.

Subsequently, a series of eight, 24-page booklets was created, each devoted to a traditional job-search tactic such as writing a resume or interviewing. Additionally, the booklets were easily adaptable to other markets. With minor changes, they were marketed to state unemployment offices in all fifty states. With further changes in content and strategy, they were sold to corporations to help employees who had been, or were about to be, laid off.

Another example of offering information in a different format was the video, *The Art of Interviewing*. In this case, the job-search techniques of correct posture, eye communication, gesturing and voice control were more easily communicated in a video format than in writing.

3. Find new users in fringe markets.

While performing seminars to promote the books, more opportunities were uncovered. For instance, some job seekers knew all the job-search techniques, but their attitude had eroded because of prolonged unemployment. As a result, the title *Coping With Unemployment* was released in 1994. Others knew how to write resumes and cover letters but did not know where to find the names of people to contact. To meet this need, the title *Help Wanted: Inquire Within* was published in 1995. This described the places to search for potential employers.

4. Implement creative promotional campaigns.

A proven marketing technique is to bundle two or more products together, using a new product to stimulate sales of a mature one. This tactic proved successful in a marketing campaign directed at parents of college students. A package comprised of *The Art of*

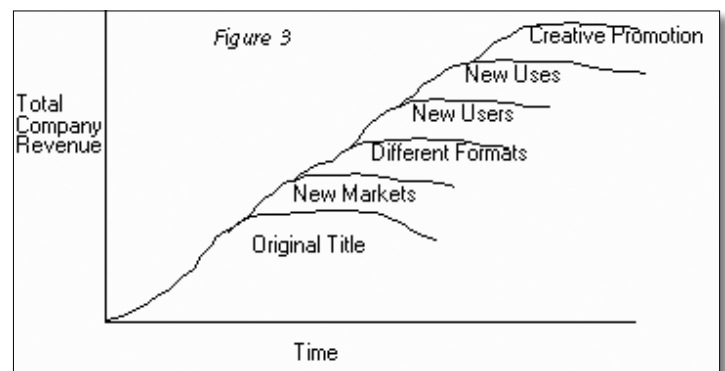
Interviewing and *Job Search 101* was offered at a discounted price to the parents of graduating students.

Between 1991 and 1995 a complete product line was created, addressing the diverse needs of people seeking job-search information from bookstores, colleges, corporations and state unemployment offices. The information was available in four books (one in Spanish), a video and eight different booklets. These actions prolonged the profitable life of the original title while creating additional revenue and profits through the line extensions. But with an improving economy and greater availability of employment, the market for job-search information began to erode. Additional planning was required to continue the publishing firm's revenue stream.

5. Find new uses for the generic information.

Job Search 101 described the basic techniques of finding employment. It explained where to find the names of prospective employers, how to contact them and how to interview effectively. Fortunately, these are the same steps required to secure and conduct a performance on television and radio shows. Even the interview techniques of correct posture, eye communication, gesturing and voice control are similar. But these were as difficult to portray to authors as they were to job seekers.

This observation bore an entirely new product line, the foundation of which was the video, *You're On The Air*, to help authors get on and perform on television and radio. Two companion guides, *Perpetual Promotion* and *It's Show Time* extended this initial product offering.



Efforts to renew the growth of *Job Search 101* created a complete product line of job-search products and spawned a new marketing opportunity. Strategic planning not only extends the growth of individual products, but it also fosters the longevity and profitability of your publishing company.

STAGE FIVE: DECLINE

Overall strategy: Harvest. After your title has spawned several offspring, its sales will eventually decline. Your distributors' sales efforts vanish, and many of those books you thought were sold are returned for full credit.

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Cradle-to-Grave Marketing *continued*

As you consider your next steps, look into the reasons for the decline. In the case of *Job Search 101*, two uncontrollable factors led to its demise. First, the unemployment rate dropped from the highest rate in recent history to its lowest point in over twenty-five years. What was once a front-page topic became filler material on page 27. Second, *Job Search 101* made no reference to online job-search techniques, which were relatively unknown when the book was first published in 1991. Subsequently, sales of *Job Search 101* began to subside.

At the same time, *You're On The Air* entered its growth stage, requiring a massive infusion of time and money. Therefore, the decision was made to remove *Job Search 101* from the marketplace.

STAGE SIX: DEMISE

Overall strategy: Abandonment. The time comes for most titles to enter their final life cycle stage. You may choose to remainder your books to recoup part of your investment, but do not choose that alternative too quickly. Instead, look for ways to leverage your investment.

For instance, giving away the remaining copies of *Job Search 101* to groups involved in the welfare-to-work program generated thousands of dollars worth of free publicity. It also stimulated greater exposure and awareness of the remaining product line.

Giving away books may help you establish contacts among people in the media, smoothing the path for future coverage. You can do the same thing by finding groups and organizations that may be able to use your books. These could include prison libraries, shelters, nursing homes or hospitals. The goodwill you create may be worth more than the cost of your books.

Know when to hold 'em and know when to fold 'em

Carefully track the sales, revenue and profitability of all your titles. Manipulate their form, distribution, pricing and promotion as each title makes the transition from stage to stage. Cultivate the life cycles of your individual titles into a prolific, profitable product line and you will foster your long-term success. 📖



Brian Jud is author of *Beyond the Bookstore* (a *Publishers Weekly* book) and *The Marketing Planning CD-ROM* describing how to sell more books profitably to special-sales buyers. Brian is the creator of the *Special-Sales Profit Center*, used by R. R. Bowker to sell publishers' books. Contact Brian at PO Box 715, Avon, CT 06001; (800) 562-4357; brianjud@bookmarketing.com or visit www.bookmarketing.com.

JUST FOR FUN:**"Closure" wins oddest book title award**

By Jeremy Lovell Fri Mar 28, 1:16 AM ET

LONDON (Reuters) – Self-help manual *If You Want Closure in Your Relationship, Start With Your Legs* won this year's oddest book title competition, *The Bookseller* trade magazine said on Friday. The book took an impressive one-third of the 8,500 votes cast online in *The Bookseller's* 30th annual competition.

Runner up, *I was Tortured By the Pygmy Love Queen*, the story of a fictitious World War Two pilot forced to bale out over the jungle, polled a distant 20 percent.

"*'If You Want Closure'*, makes redundant an entire genre of self-help tomes. So effective is the title that you don't even need to read the book itself," said the magazine's deputy editor Joel Rickett.

The winner beat stiff competition from other shortlisted titles including the somewhat niche *Cheese Problems Solved* and *How to Write a How to Write Book* and the rather provocative *Are Women Human? And Other International Dialogues*.

The annual competition was launched in 1978 at the Frankfurt Book Fair when it was won by the memorably titled *Proceedings of the Second International Workshop on Nude Mice*. Since then, with the exceptions of 1987 and 1991 when no award was granted due, according to Rickett, to a lack of oddness, the weird and wonderful titles have flowed thick and fast with some eyebrow raising winners.

Joy of Chickens took the 1980 title, with *The Theory of Lengthwise Rolling* in 1983, *Lesbian Sadoomasochism Safety Manual* in 1990, *Living with Crazy Buttocks* in 2002 and *Bombproof Your Horse* in 2004 are but a sample. However, the 1997 winner *Joy of Sex: Pocket Edition* does stand out among the glittering array, and in September this year the public will be asked to vote for the oddest of all the winners.

"That and '*Nude Mice*' probably remain among the weirdest, but it is a strong competition," said Rickett. "And the quality of weirdness does seem to be improving in part as technology allows greater access to publishing. Certainly we are getting more titles coming forward," he added. 📖 (Editing by Paul Casciato)

Next Deadline**April 21****Don't be late – no kidding!**

Send us news on your new releases or upcoming appearances or anything else you wish to share.

Get your news and articles in EARLY! Send your information, articles and announcements to **newslettereditor@stlouispublishers.org**.

NOT SO FUN...**Restrictive new policies from Amazon**

Amazon continues to amaze us. But this time, not in a good way. This conversation comes from Linda Austin and Bob Baker. At the link to this article, you'll find links to additional articles and blogs on the topic.

Linda: I just caught whiff of this big news about Amazon forcing small publishers and subsidy presses to use Booksurge for Print on Demand in order to let customers buy their books on Amazon. *The Washington Post*, *Wall Street Journal* and *Publishers Weekly*, etc., now have articles about the Amazon POD grab.

www.writersweekly.com/the_latest_from_angelahoycom/004597_03272008.html


Publish America has refused to play ball with Amazon, several small presses are refusing also, stating they will now work through Barnes&Noble and other online booksellers. Authors and small publishers I know are writing letters threatening to boycott Amazon.

Bob: I've only done some quick reading on this development. But it seems to me this will have the most effect on:

- Author services companies like AuthorHouse, Booklocker, etc., who will have to convert thousands of books to Booksurge to keep their author/publisher customers happy.
- And authors who publish thru one of these author service companies, who will suddenly find their books not for sale directly from Amazon.

However, for true self-published authors, while it might be a pain, it's not the end of the world. If you're already enrolled in the Advantage Program, you won't be affected at all.

For those of us who use Lightning Source to print our books AND have them service Amazon, what we'll need to do is enroll our titles in the Advantage Program, then fulfill Advantage orders using Lightning Source. The main drawback is that you'll now have to pay the \$29.95 a year Advantage fee and cover shipping your books from LSI to Amazon.

I hope I explained that correctly. It's a pain for some, and short-sighted on Amazon's part, but if they get their way, the world won't exactly fall apart. I think if anything, this news shows that being a true self-publisher is the best way to go! 

Editor's Note: Remember, if you're a member of SPAN, you can get the first year of Amazon Advantage's \$29.99 fee waived as a SPAN membership benefit. And SLPA Members currently have a special membership deal available with SPAN. Contact Sue Sylvia, Christine Frank or Linda Austin for more information on SPAN's special deal.

PMA and SPAN speak out against Amazon's recent policy**From PMA:**

PMA, the Independent Book Publishers Association, representing more than 4,000 independent publishers, is speaking out against Amazon's recent policy aimed at publishers who use print-on demand technology to sell directly on amazon.com. The company has directed that publishers either must print their books on demand exclusively at Amazon's subsidiary printer (BookSurge) for fulfillment of orders placed with Amazon, or incur additional cost to print elsewhere and maintain inventory with the online retailer.

"This policy imposes a significant financial burden on tens of thousands of small and independent publishers who can least afford it," points out Executive Director Terry Nathan. "Without the opportunity to benefit from competitive pricing, small publishers risk at best an expensive and needless overhaul of their manufacturing process, and at worst, the loss of their livelihood.

"On behalf of all the small and independent publishers whose businesses are in jeopardy, we urge Amazon to reconsider its position," continues Nathan. "Over the years, Jeff Bezos and his company have given small and independent publishers a level playing field to compete with the largest of companies. Suddenly, this magnificent playing field has been converted into a 'members only' club, to the detriment of those very publishers who have contributed to Amazon's success. We will continue to monitor developments in the weeks ahead."

— Terry Nathan, Director

PMA, the Independent Book Publishers Association

From PMA:

The SPAN Board and I have written a response to Amazon's new POD/BookSurge policy to have all their POD printing go through their subsidiary, BookSurge. Because the letter to Jeff Bezos and the Amazon.com Board is three pages long, I have placed it on the SPAN Web site at: www.spannet.org/Amazon-POD.htm

Here is SPAN's position on the Amazon.com's policy:

"SPAN is a nonprofit trade association representing over 1,000 book publishers and authors. Our members are of our members are vendors of Amazon.com through one your programs. It is fair to say that almost all of our publishers and authors who use POD to distribute through Amazon.com will be negatively affected by this new policy."

"It is because so many of our members will be adversely affected that the SPAN Board is going on record as opposing Amazon.com requiring all publishers using Amazon's POD distribution to print with BookSurge."

Thanks to the SPAN members who responded to my survey. I appreciate your help and support in developing this position statement.

— Scott Flora, Executive Director

SPAN - Small Publishers Association of North America 