



News & Views

▶ Empowering authors and publishers to create and market books

APRIL 2009

APRIL 8 MEMBERSHIP MEETING:

Be the book: packaging yourself and your book successfully

What does it mean to “be the book”? Bruce Kupper, founding partner of Black Twig Communications, vice-president of marketing for Celebrity Chef Kitchens, and author of the recently published book *Personality Sells* will discuss personality marketing. This is a unique opportunity to find out how being 100 percent you can lead to recognition and increased book sales! You'll learn:

- The latest trends in marketing and branding
- How to use your personality to connect with your target audience
- How to build a brand and differentiate yourself from the competition
- To identify and apply the strengths of your own personality to your publishing endeavors

Featured Speaker

Bruce Kupper is one of the founding partners of Black Twig Communications, a St. Louis-based, full-service marketing and communications agency serving international, national, regional and local business-to-business and retail accounts in a variety of industries. He has more than 31 years of expertise in the communications industry.



Over the past 25 years, Bruce has trained more than 3,000 sales professionals in the media industry. His no-nonsense approach to sales and planning has been recognized in publications like *USA Today*, *Business Week* and the *New York Times*.

Bruce's entrepreneurial achievements have been recognized by the prestigious Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year program, which he won in 2000. He was also awarded recognition in the Communication/Entertainment category in both 1998 and 1999. His management practices were also recognized in 1999 when he received the Arthur Andersen Gateway Best Practices AwardSM for “Best Practices Motivating and Retaining Employees.”


Prior to Black Twig, Bruce was the Account Supervisor for the Midwestern Service Office of Young & Rubicam Inc. Bruce handled Chrysler/Plymouth and succeeded in adding the Dodge line to his accounts, becoming the first executive in the country to combine two distinct automotive line accounts at the same advertising agency. He was Young & Rubicam's National Account

Executive of the Year in 1977, but declined the position of Vice President for Public Relations in Detroit to start his own agency.

Bruce served Senator William Cohen, then U.S. Senator from Maine and later Secretary of Defense in the Clinton administration, as central district staff member and office manager from 1973 to 1975. As a young man, he worked as a sports reporter for *The Nashua Telegraph* as well as a radio sports announcer in Lewiston.

Bruce currently serves on the board of directors for the Regional Business Council and the American Association of Advertising Agencies. He was chairman and past president of the St. Louis Advertising and Marketing Association, as well as former chairman of the Board of Governors, Missouri Council, of the American Association of Advertising Agencies, and has served on the boards of the Better Business Bureau, the Arthritis Foundation, the Caring Foundation and the St. Louis Advertising Club.

Born in Geneva, New York, and raised in Nashua, New Hampshire, Bruce graduated cum laude from Bates College in Lewiston, Maine, where he received a B.A. in political science. He also earned a Coro Foundation Fellowship for a master of arts in public administration.

Join us Wednesday evening, April 11, at the Lodge at Des Peres. Doors open for networking at 6:30 p.m.; meeting begins at 7:00 p.m. The formal meeting concludes around 8:30 p.m. with networking continuing until 9:00 p.m. 

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Highlights from Small Press Month

By Sue Sylvia

This year, SLPA Board members presented four free workshops at area Borders Stores to share knowledge and answer questions about the publishing industry. Each week, a store in a different area hosted us on a Saturday evening.

The sessions, titled "How to Publish Your Book," provide a complete overview of the publishing industry and generally draw a steady attendance of those interested in learning how to bring their ideas to life. Many of our SLPA members first find us after attending one of these sessions. SLPA has made this event an annual tradition for about eight years now. Through the years we've met many new friends at these sessions and established some good relationships with the stores as well. Borders has warmly welcomed us every year.

This year, we appeared in Sunset Hills, Brentwood, Edwardsville and Creve Coeur. In the space of two hours, we cover a lot of ground under four main topics:


- Self-publishing vs. traditional publishing
- Turning your idea into a book
- Getting your book into the marketplace
- Promoting and selling your book



SLPA members Ed Sylvia (above) and Barb Davis (below) share their publishing insights at one of four SLPA "How to Publish Your Book" workshops held at area Borders bookstores this past March.



While you don't "see" it at monthly meetings, this is one of the "behind the scenes" jobs that your SLPA volunteer board of directors invests a lot of time and energy in every year. Both present and past board members lend a hand. It is our effort to provide outreach service to the community on behalf of SLPA and requires planning, coordination with the stores, publicity and presentation of materials, in addition to our regular monthly responsibilities.

Special thanks to those who gave freely of their time this year to make these sessions happen: Lynnette Schuepbach, Natasha Moore, Barbara Davis, Susan Whinnery, Danielle Alexander, Sue Sylvia, Ed Sylvia and Bob Baker. 

President's Corner by Lynette Schuepbach

Building business together

Up-beat. Animated. Enthusiastic. Professional. Knowledgeable. These are all characteristics of someone who IS their book.

Looking at an inanimate object...a book...does not bring emotion,




enthusiasm, and emergency to the buying process. This is something we all struggle with when producing a cover that sells. No doubt, an appealing cover, testimonials and good writing skills make a difference, but everyone can learn to add more to that package which can increase sales.

Lynette Schuepbach When writing a book there are other aspects that can make or break a sale.

Listening, learning and being entertained by the author of a book is one method that is used to enhance sales. Branding yourself as an authority on the subject or identifying yourself as part of the group being addressed is another.

Although not everyone is born to be a public speaker, there are some things that everyone can use to improve. Bruce Kupper is one of the founding partners of Black Twig Communications, a St. Louis-based, full-service marketing and communications agency serving international, national, regional and local business-to-business and retail accounts in a variety of industries. He has 30 years of experience and is the author of *Personality Sells*. Bruce will give us some information about how to BE the book we've spent so much time and energy writing for the world to enjoy.

Join us and share your experience with other authors and publishers. 

—Lynette Schuepbach, President
lschuepbach@charter.net

Attend the premiere publishing education event of 2009

IBPA Publishing University May 26-28, 2009 Roosevelt Hotel NYC

IBPA, the Independent Book Publishers Association, the oldest and largest non-profit trade association for independent publishers in the USA, will hold its 25th year of quality publishing education in NYC.

Publishing University is considered IBPA's cornerstone event, and as education professionals, we provide our participants with the best available teachers in the publishing industry as well as topics of interest and importance to publishers of all sizes. A few of the highlights this year include the opportunity to meet with speakers and industry veterans for brief, one-on-one, private consultations on a wide range of publishing topics and a **keynote address with Dominique Raccach of Sourcebooks and Rudy Shur of Square One Publishers**, who will offer their unique perspectives about what's on the horizon for the publishing industry.

This year's conference will draw attendance from all over the world. Because of its significant location this year in the heart of New York City, the publishing capital of the world, a record turnout is anticipated and a great opportunity for networking.

The three-day conference is an excellent opportunity for you to meet with peers, vendors who service the publishing industry, and key professionals who are available to answer your questions and take time to meet with you between sessions and during the social events planned before, during, and after hours. Before you make decisions that will affect the future of your publishing business, take advantage of this time to converse with your peers and brainstorm your ideas with each other.

Reserve your spot today at www.thepublishinguniversity.com. Discounted hotel reservations are available, too. Please feel free to contact Sue Sylvia (slpa@staircasepress.com) if you have any questions. We look forward to seeing you at Publishing University. 📖

SLPA online updates

If you currently have book, service or speaker listings on our Web site, we can easily update your listings as needed. Please e-mail updates to Sue Sylvia at slpa@staircasepress.com. 📖

Butch Drury receives IBPA affiliate scholarship to IBPA Publishing University

SLPA Member Butch Drury of Rivendell Books will represent SLPA this year at Pub U. He is the author of the recently published book, *A Different Kind of Sentinel*. Butch will receive full tuition to Publishing University as well as a travel stipend from IBPA. IBPA offers each affiliate one scholarship per year and many SLPA members have benefited from this experience. Application for this opportunity is offered every December and the award is announced in early March. Watch the SLPA newsletter and Web site for application information each November. 📖

Behind the scenes with the board

Danielle Alexander, Publicity coordinator

As SLPA publicity coordinator, Danielle Alexander is responsible for disseminating our message to local media outlets, and ultimately to our target audience, through various community calendar listings and periodic media appearances.



Danielle Alexander

Danielle L. Alexander is working to finish her first book, a memoir, entitled *The Me that Use to Be*. She was encouraged to write her memoir after taking a writing course with Bobbi Linkemer, a fellow SLPA member. Mrs. Linkemer brought Danielle to the SLPA three years ago and she has been inspired every since. Two years ago she began her own publishing company, Story to Tell Productions, and plans to publish her book along with others under this company name.

By day, she works as a product specialist for Ascension Health, a Catholic healthcare organization whose mission is to serve the poor and vulnerable and provide free healthcare to all—two things that are very dear to Danielle's heart. Danielle is also a motivational speaker and has spoken all over the country telling her uplifting story of rising above low self-esteem to become an empowered, strong woman. Contact Danielle at danielle_alexander@msn.com. 📖

8 ways to build your author platform

By Patricia Fry



Patricia Fry

If you've been poking around at writing and publishing sites, attending writers' conferences and reading about authorship, you've heard/read the term platform. You may even know what it means. It's your way of attracting readers for your book. It's your following, your level of notoriety and the power of your personal and professional contacts.

The extent of your platform can be the defining factor in landing a publisher for your memoir, novel or self-help book. But the scope of your platform will also determine your book's ultimate success.

You hear experts say, "The best time to start establishing your platform is before your book is ready to make the rounds of agents and/or publishers." I maintain that hopeful authors should start building a platform before they write the book. Here's how:

1. Build promotion into your book before it is a book. For fiction, choose your setting carefully. Make sure it is conducive to promotion. Select a city that's interesting—one in which the citizens take pride. If your story portrays a positive view of the community, residents of this town are apt to welcome you for author events.

Involve characters in current issues: autism, gang activity, politics or childhood obesity, for example. Give a character a horse or a motorcycle. This gives you additional ammunition for promoting. Write for an audience base that goes beyond the typical mystery or romance reader.

2. Establish an active and or even interactive website related to your book. The earlier you build a website the sooner you can start promoting the concept of your book and, by the way, your expertise and/or talent in your topic or genre. Hopeful authors frequently ask me, "Once I finish my book, should I design a website just for the book?" I tell them, "No! Do it NOW. Get potential customers accustomed to visiting your site in order to glean information or to be entertained. Entice them to come regularly by writing a daily or weekly blog, running contests, introducing new features and presenting new concepts.

3. Hone your public speaking skills. Whether you are writing a thriller, children's story, historical novel, memoir, how-to or a book of abuse and recovery, one of your greatest assets is your personality and your personal touch. If you aren't accustomed to speaking in public, take steps to become skilled. Join Toastmasters. Take on leadership roles at work. Go out and practice speaking in front of people. Personal presentations sell books and this is true whether you're reading your book

to children at the local library or traveling thousands of miles every year presenting workshops to professionals.


4. Create one or more programs around the theme of your book and start presenting them now. Yes, do this even before your book is a book. If you hope to land a traditional royalty publisher, this will go a long way toward impressing him or her. If a publisher has half dozen magnificent book manuscripts to choose from, he's going to pick the one that will make him the most money. How does he decide? He'll choose the author with the best platform—the author who has an audience and/or a measure of notoriety in his or her field or genre.

5. Become known in your field or genre by getting involved with appropriate websites and organizations. Affiliations are important when it comes to establishing your platform. And why wait until your book is published? Become familiar with organizations related to your topic or genre. Join those that you feel can help move your career forward through education and/or association. Become known by participating.

6. Write articles on your topic or stories in your genre and widely submit them to appropriate publications. This is an excellent way to get your name out and attract an audience. Article/story-writing is a field in and of itself, so make sure you become familiar with the process. Read "A Writer's Guide to Magazine Articles," www.matilijapress.com.

7. Develop a massive mailing and e-mail list and keep adding to it. Don't take your mailing list for granted. Treasure it. Protect it. Keep adding to it. Not only will it be useful in launching your marketing plan, but some of your contacts may actually provide additional promotional opportunities. Do you know someone who heads a major corporation where you could give seminars reflecting the theme of your book? Maybe you have a friend who plans conferences internationally, who runs a TV station or who is of celebrity status. The size of your mailing list is important, but so is the content.

8. Establish a newsletter and distribute it to your e-mail list. Use your mailing list to notify people when your book is published, to inform them of your appearances, etc. And consider starting a newsletter to dispense additional information and announcements on a more regular basis.

There's much that you can do to promote your book even before it is a book and to establish your platform along the way. 

Patricia Fry is a full-time writer, editorial consultant, workshop leader and the author of 29 books, including *The Right Way to Write, Publish and Sell Your Book* and *The Author's Repair Kit*. www.matilijapress.com. Patricia is also the president of SPAWN (Small Publishers, Artists and Writers Network) www.spawn.org.

7 ways to keep your spirit up in a down economy

By Michael Hyatt

I've met with several key business leaders in the last few weeks. To a person, they say their greatest challenge is staying encouraged. With the economy the way it is—and no end in sight—it is difficult for leaders to remain optimistic.

But this has always been the challenge of leadership. *You must lead yourself before you can lead others.* It's that simple. If you can learn to do that, especially in this environment, you will have developed a skill that will serve you for life. How can you keep your spirits up in a down economy? Here are seven suggestions:

1. Turn off the news media. Turn off the TV. Turn off the radio. They are no longer reporting on the problem; they are the problem. The relentless torrent of bad news only makes people—including you—more discouraged and less confident about the future.

2. Connect with God. You were not created to function without a connection to God. He is the ultimate encouragement. Trying to navigate life without him is like trying to ride a motorcycle without starting the engine. You can do it, but it only works downhill. Unfortunately, a lot of life is uphill. The way I connect is by reading a passage from the Bible and praying on my commute to work.


3. Read inspirational books. It's not enough to turn off the flow of garbage into your brain, you need to replace it with something positive. You need a vivid reminder that people have gone through tough times before. They have not only survived but thrived. If you don't know where else to start, read a good history book like *1776* by David McCullough or a good inspirational book like *The Traveler's Gift* by Andy Andrews.

4. Hang around positive people. This sounds harsh, but you cannot afford to be around negative people—especially those that refuse to change. The problem is that these people are highly infectious. And their disease is deadly. If you don't avoid them, you will become like them. Instead, intentionally seek out and befriend positive people. Their attitude is contagious, too.

5. Exercise regularly. This is one of the most important things you can do to keep your spirit up. It's hard to feel good about life when you feel badly about yourself. When I exercise, I always feel a little proud of myself (in a good sense). I think, *I took initiative. I was proactive. Life is full of possibilities!* The release of endorphin's also has a measurable, positive impact on your brain and on your thinking.


6. Get more rest. It's almost impossible to stay upbeat if you are tired. You can't light up a room if your batteries are drained. Therefore, it is important to know exactly how much rest you need and make it a priority. If you are like me, I often confuse discouragement with being weary. But it's amazing how much brighter things look after a good night's sleep!

7. Go to church. When I get discouraged, I am tempted to isolate myself and retreat from the world. But this is exactly the opposite of what I need to do. All of us need a caring community of people who will love us for who we are, not what we do. We also need to be reminded that there is a purpose to our lives and to our circumstances. Nothing is happening by accident. It is all intended for our good. Church provides both of these opportunities.


Leading yourself is easy when things are going well. It pretty much takes care of itself. But when the external environment is negative, it takes work. But this is the leaders most important work. Without it, you won't be much use to anyone else. 

Michael Hyatt is CEO of Nashville-based publishing company Thomas Nelson. © 2009, Michael S. Hyatt. All rights reserved. Originally published at www.michaelhyatt.com

Display with FPA at the Florida Library Association annual conference

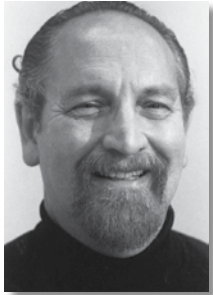
Publishers, self-publishers and authors are welcome to display their products in the Florida Publishers Association, Inc.'s booth (#518) at the FLA Conference. FPA is a past winner of the FLA Best Booth award. We always display products face out, offer giveaways and several door prizes. To receive an FPA display brochure, e-mail Betsy Wright-Lampe at FPAbooks@aol.com. 

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Member Spotlight: Allan R. Shickman

Author Allan R. Shickman has been a member of the SLPA since 2006. Bonnie Lenz, his publisher and “Wife-in Chief” of Earthshaker Books, attended a SLPA meeting after finding out about SLPA on the Internet. “She immediately recognized the value of this dynamic organization, and we joined together in September,” said Allan.

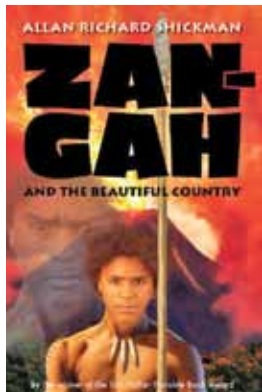


Allan R. Shickman

Allan explained that he and his wife joined SLPA because they recognized that they needed technical and commercial assistance and guidance beyond what they gleaned from how-to self-publishing books. “The members of SLPA, a diverse

and varied group of professionals—writers, publishers, editors, designers, promoters, etc.—freely offered their experience and advice, and provided a rich resource for us beginners,” remembered Allan.

Zan-Gah: A Prehistoric Adventure, published in July 2000, is Allan’s first book. “*Zan-Gah* is a young adult novel about a youth growing to manhood in a harsh prehistoric world. Seeking his missing twin, he encounters captivity and conflict, love and victory. When Zan finds his brother, his problems really begin.” Shickman added that “young people and their parents report that it is an exciting and moving tale.”




Allan recently completed his second novel, a sequel to *Zan-Gah* entitled, *Zan-Gah and the Beautiful Country*, which will be available locally in April, and will come out in bookstores in September 2009. “The new story begins a year after the first *Zan-Gah* ends. Trauma and personal disaster bring out the worst in Dael, Zan’s twin, and send him on the path of furious hatred and violence. It is Zan’s task to calm his

twin and lead him away from thoughts both destructive and self-destructive. But even the paradise of the Beautiful Country will not erase them.”


The St. Louis Publishers Association has been a valuable friend in the development of Allan’s publishing endeavors. “My wife and I have profited from the information gleaned from its newsletter, the speakers at its monthly meetings, and what we have learned from workshops such as the MINI PMA University and publishing seminars. We have made valuable

contacts with a variety of experts, including designers, marketing specialists, Web builders, consultants, and other publishers. With SLPA we have gained exposure opportunities through the catalog and events such as the Big Read and the Arkansas Book Fest. SLPA has served as a link and portal to national professional organizations and contacts, especially PMA (now IBPA).”

For information about the Zan-Gah series, visit www.zan-gah.com. Allan can be contacted at albonnie@mindspring.com.

Editor’s note: Do you want to be profiled in the SLPA News “Member Spotlight” column? How has the SLPA helped you? What inspiring story and publishing accomplishments can you share with the rest of us? To be considered for the “Member Spotlight” column, contact SLPA communications manager and newsletter editor Ligaya Figueras via e-mail at figuerasl@sbcglobal.net. 

What’s Ahead?

Let us help you untangle the publishing legal jungle. Bring your publishing law questions and intellectual property attorneys from the St. Louis Volunteer Lawyers and Accountants for the Arts will bring their answers. The meeting is May 13. Mark your calendar now! 

Questions About SLPA?



Contact membership chairperson:
Christine Frank at 314-205-2679

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.

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