

Book Marketing Confidential

An insider's guide to being a successful independent author

Bob Baker

www.FullTimeAuthor.com

© Bob Baker - All Rights Reserved

Published by FullTimeAuthor.com, PO Box 28441, St. Louis, MO 63146 USA.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means – electronic, mechanical, recording or otherwise – without the prior written permission of Bob Baker.

Introduction

Thanks for your interest in reading this confidential report on book marketing and self-publishing. I've been actively involved with writing and publishing books since 1992. And since 2004 I've been able to support myself full-time primarily from the sales of my independently published books, reports, audio programs, online courses, and more. It's how I plan to spend the rest of my days, as I truly feel I've found my right livelihood.

I know first-hand the sense of personal satisfaction that comes with putting out your own book. I also understand the deep sense of purpose and meaning a book can give you when it touches people's lives in ways you never imagined. I've benefited greatly from my pursuit of do-it-yourself book publishing, and I'm on a mission to empower others to enjoy the same thrills as I have.

I hope the following pages inform and inspire you to breathe life into your own book ideas and allow you to share your thoughts and stories with the world.

To your publishing success!

-Bob

The 4 Debilitating Myths That Hold Back Most Self-Publishers

I unapologetically believe that most of the obstacles creative people encounter are self-imposed. Call me a delusional optimist, but I've found that most of the grim, foreboding "realities" of the book industry we authors often hear about are merely perceptions that exist in people's minds. And like all thoughts that bounce around in our craniums, we have a choice to accept or reject them — or, better yet, to replace them with more empowering perceptions.

With that in mind, here's my list of the top myths that authors and publishers cling to — even though there are plenty of real-life examples around to disprove them all.

Warning: Read the rest of this report only if you're prepared to do away with the comfortable excuses that have kept you from actively pursuing your book idea. Removing obstacles can be painful, but it's the kind of discomfort that can lead to great accomplishments.

Myth #1 – Printing Books Is Prohibitively Expensive

Maybe five or ten years ago, this was true. But not any more. If you've been paying attention to advancements in new technologies such as short-run digital printing and print-on-demand (POD), you should know that producing a high-quality, bookstore-worthy book is well within anyone's grasp — without spending half of your life's savings.

Sure, you will need help with editing, design and preparing your files for printing. And, unless you have a close friend or relative who can help you in these areas, you will have to pay for those services. But when it comes to getting your book printed, the costs can be extremely low.

Case in point: I recently used a print-on-demand service for one of my books. I paid nothing up front to get my digital files set up in the company's system. After that, my cost per book was just over three dollars. Whether I printed one book or 100, it cost me only three bucks per book (plus shipping).

Would you consider those dollar figures to be prohibitively expensive? Scratch one excuse off your list.

Myth #2 – Self-Published Books Aren't Taken Seriously

I've written about this self-publishing inferiority complex before. I don't mind bringing it up again, because getting over this mental hurdle is vitally important. Here's the bottom line: Self-publishing your own book isn't superior or inferior to traditional publishing. Either path holds great potential for exposure, sales and success ... or disappointment and wallowing in obscurity. No matter what route you take, it all comes down to what you make of it.

When it comes to how your book will be perceived by others ... Sure, you may still run into certain people and institutions that snub their noses at self-published books. (However, that is a dying perception.) But what difference does that make? Why should you care? The only people whose opinions really matter are readers and book buyers. And they are rarely concerned with how a book was produced. All that matters to them is how they benefit from it.

Have you ever heard someone ask, "Have you read the latest book from Random House?" or "Hey, is that the new Simon & Schuster book?" Not likely. Quick, tell me what company published the latest book by J.K. Rowling, Dan Brown or Janet Evanovich? How about Malcolm Gladwell, Suze Orman or Mitch Albom?

Chances are, you don't know. And neither do your readers. Book lovers don't buy books based on who produced them. They buy because they are drawn to the author, the title or the subject matter ... or because of a personal recommendation or a positive mention in the media.

As long as it looks good and delivers the written-word goods, your book will be taken seriously by the only people who matter: readers and book buyers. Take another excuse off your list of myths.

Myth #3 – Self-Publishing Is Small Potatoes

Another aspect of the self-publishing inferiority complex is the fear that you'll always pale in comparison to the big-time operations of the major players. Don't get trapped in this "theirs will always be bigger than mine" mentality. Small is good when it comes to publishing your own book. As a small-time operator, you can target and serve your audience better than most lumbering corporations can. Doing it yourself does not mean you have to settle for insignificance.

So, if you produce your own book, you'll be best served by not being embarrassed by that fact. Don't apologize or explain yourself. Just say, "Here's my book and here is how you can benefit from it."

Another cool thing about self-publishing is that, by doing so, you'll be in great company. Take a look at John Kremer's Self-Publishing Hall of Fame web page at www.bookmarket.com/selfpublish.html. It's filled with countless success stories about self-published authors, including Mark Twain, Walt Whitman, Leo Tolstoj, Henry David Thoreau, Edgar Allen Poe, Herman Melville, and Benjamin Franklin.

A short list of books that were originally self-published by their authors include:

- Ken Blanchard and Spencer Johnson's *The One-Minute Manager*
- James Redfield's *The Celestine Prophecy*
- Robert Ringer's *Winning Through Intimidation*
- Ken Keyes' *The Handbook of Higher Consciousness*
- John Javna's *50 Simple Things You Can Do to Save the Earth*
- Richard Paul Evans' *The Christmas Box*
- Julia Cameron's *The Artist's Way*
- Richard N. Bolles' *What Color Is Your Parachute*

Still think self-publishing is small potatoes? Cross one more excuse off the list.

Myth #4 – Effective Marketing Requires a Big Budget

This is another misguided perception that seems to paralyze so many aspiring authors. Of course, if you had a huge wad of cash to blow, you could easily find many ways to spend tens of thousands of dollars on book promotion "opportunities." Salespeople will line up to take your money. You could buy print ads, a glitzy trade show display, a custom designed book tour van, billboard ads, space in coop mailings, and more.

But if you don't have a budget for marketing, you are not out of luck. There are oodles of ways you can use creativity instead of cash and brains instead of your brawny bank account to get the word out and generate sales.

In the first chapter of Shel Horowitz's book *Grassroots Marketing*, he briefly describes a \$10 marketing budget. That's right, a mere ten bucks! It includes using free email and website space; a series of emailed, locally faxed and hand-delivered press releases; appearances on radio and TV shows; a well-designed and

compellingly written flier; and articles written by you that appear in online and print trade publications.

All of the marketing tactics on Horowitz's list cost little or no money. And with some creative thought applied, all of them can be effective at making people aware of you and your book. I can confirm this, because during the first few years of my own publishing journey I spent \$30 to \$40 a month total on self-promotion (and most of that was for basic Internet access and website hosting). And now, several years later, I'm a full-time author. Marketing does not require a big-time bankroll.

Now take out a big red pen and enthusiastically scratch this final excuse off your list. All you have left to do now is get busy preparing your book for the world to see.

Four Ways to Attract More Readers (and Buyers) Faster

Attracting new fans. Admit it, that's what having a book published is all about — getting more people to read your words, know about you, and buy your books. And hopefully, getting a LOT more people to do those things.

Why else do you work so hard to craft chapters, paragraphs, sentences — even individual word choices? For what other reason do you fight off sleep so you can finish just one more section before you call it a night?

I don't believe you go through these things to amuse yourself and hone your grammar skills in obscurity. You work hard because you know you have something of value to offer ... and you want to reach as many people as possible with your ideas.

Marketing is the thing that helps you reach that goal. But marketing is also a subject that confuses a lot of writers. Whether they write fiction or nonfiction, are self-published or traditionally published, writers the world over know they need to promote themselves. But many don't know where to start, much less how to continue marketing effectively.

Does this describe you? If so, consider the following scenario:

Let's say you went to an average U.S. city and rounded up 1,000 people and gathered them in a large auditorium. These 1,000 folks would be randomly chosen and made up of people of all ages, genders and backgrounds. Next, you'd distribute information about your book, talk to these people, and even let them read sample chapters.

After this direct exposure, what are the chances that one person out of those thousand would be attracted to your ideas and personal identity enough to buy your book? Most writers, regardless of how obscure their subject matter is, should feel pretty confident about being able to win over at least one new fan from this group of 1,000. That's a one-tenth of one percent conversion rate.

Now let's multiply that number to the entire U.S. population of 317 million people. One-tenth of one percent would be 317,000 people. That would be enough fans to make you a bonafide bestselling author of staggering proportions. Right?

So how do you find and connect with those one-in-a-thousand buyers (without the use of auditoriums across the country)? Most likely, you can't afford the massive advertising budget of major companies. These corporations spray their marketing message over the masses, knowing that it'll only stick to a small percentage of the population.

The solution: You must find creative, low-cost ways to go directly to those fans who make up that one-tenth of one percent. Don't waste your time and money promoting yourself to people who will most likely never embrace your words.

The Four D's of Effective Book Marketing

Here are four steps to take to reach those new fans:

1) Define Your Distinct Identity

You must have a firm grasp on what your writing (or latest book) is about. And you must be able to define it clearly and quickly. What sets your book apart from others in its genre? What attitude or social statement do you (or your book) make?

Generic self-help, romance or science fiction titles won't cut it. Dig deeper and discover your unique identity. When you do finally reach some of those rare potential fans, don't lose them by not being clear about who you are.

2) Describe Your Ideal Fan

Once you have a handle on who you are as a writer, it's time to paint a clear picture of your ideal fan. Can you articulate how your readers dress, where they work, what TV shows they watch, what they do for fun, and who their favorite cultural heroes are?

Observe the types of people who come to your public speaking engagements or readings, and note what they have in common. Conduct simple online surveys with people who visit your website or subscribe to your email list.

Knowing precisely who your fans are will dictate what avenues you use to reach them and how you communicate your message once you do reach them.

3) Determine How to Get Access to Your Ideal Fans

Once you know exactly what type of fan you're going after, start making a list of the various resources these specific people are attracted to. What magazines and newspapers do they read? Where do they hang out? What radio stations do they listen to? What retail outlets do they frequent? What websites and social media platforms do they spend time on? What email newsletters do they subscribe to?

For example, if your fans are mostly Harley riders, go to Google and start entering keywords related to motorcycles. Evaluate the search results and compile a list of the many good sources you uncover.

4) Deliver Your Message Via the Appropriate Avenues

Armed with this targeted list of contacts, get busy! Send email press releases to niche media outlets. Contact the webmasters and editors of appropriate publications. Post messages in specialized forums. Visit and interact via the websites of similar authors or reading groups. Contact organizations and charities related to your writing niche.

In short, go to where your ideal fans are. And engage in conversations through these outlets relentlessly. Why spend too much time and money trying to promote to everyone ... when you can save money and be far more effective by going directly to those valuable one-in-a-thousand fans?

The Truth About Readers and Buyers and Fans

If you were to ask most authors and publishers to name three people who can most influence a book's success, you'd likely get responses such as, "a buyer at a retail bookstore chain" or "the book editor at the *New York Times*" or "one of Oprah's show producers."

These are understandable answers. But I encourage you to consider three other types of people. And I'll even go out on a limb and suggest that they are the three kinds of folks who will most dramatically affect the notoriety and sales of your book.

They are ... *readers and buyers and fans*.

They're so crucial to your success, I'll examine each one in detail.

Readers

As the name implies, readers are simply people who have read what you've written. I list them separately because not all readers are buyers or fans, although they certainly can be both.

A reader can be someone who borrows your book from a friend, checks out your book from a library, or reads a sample of your work online. They may end up enjoying what you've written, or they may not.

Readers are all important. The more people who absorb your words, the more likely you are to generate positive word of mouth and sales – that is, if what you've written connects with enough of the people who read your stuff.

That's the key thing to keep in mind here: Your primary goal isn't to make sales (in my opinion). It should be to get as many people as possible to read what you've written, by any means necessary. You can accomplish this by:

- Making book excerpts available on your website
- Giving away short printed excerpts at your live appearances
- Offering book excerpts to appropriate magazines and newspapers

- Giving free review copies of your book to people who may influence others to read and purchase your title

Think about the many ways you can get people to read what you've written. If many of them like what they read, you'll soon have a lot more buyers and fans. Which brings us to ...

Buyers

This type of person is obviously someone who spends money to purchase your book. While buyers often consider themselves readers and fans, they don't always. For example, many children's books are bought by parents and given to the ultimate readers: their kids.

Many other books – such as Spencer Johnson's *Who Moved My Cheese?* and John C. Maxwell's *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership* – are purchased by parents, friends, employers, and others as gifts given to people who they feel need them.

Therefore, it's important to know that not all buyers are readers. So when marketing your book, don't think only about the end user. Consider the various types of people who would want to purchase your book as a gift for the eventual reader. Then focus some of your promotion efforts on making these potential buyers aware of the great book you have for their favorite readers.

Fans

This type of book lover is most often a buyer and almost always a reader. But what sets this valuable individual apart is that they really, really like you, your writing style and/or your message.

Fans are crucial to your success as an author. Critical acclaim and media exposure are great, but nothing beats having lots of regular people raving about your book and recommending it to friends.

Some of the best ways to cultivate fans include:

- Using your website to collect the names and addresses of people who enjoy what you've written (and following up with them on a regular basis)
- Turning your live events into opportunities to personally connect with your readers

- Encouraging group discussions of your topic and providing handouts to guide people who are interested
- Thinking of every interaction you have with the public as a chance to start a relationship with a new fan

So, what are the three types of people that can most influence your book's success? Now you know they are readers and buyers and fans. You also know why they're important. And, hopefully, you also have some new ideas on how to grab their attention and attract more of them.

The Best Way to Promote Your Book Right Now

Are you confused about book promotion? Are you frustrated by your lack of progress in the marketing and sales department? If so, pull up a chair and read this final section, because I'm going to reveal a powerful little secret to book promotion success.

When it comes right down to it, there are basically two aspects of effective book promotion. They include:

- **The thinking part** (expanding your knowledge, generating ideas, and staying positive)
- **The doing part** (taking action)

Each step is vitally important. Reading and thinking about book promotion is crucial, but it means nothing if you don't follow up your ideas with action. And getting busy for the sake of "getting your name out there," without a plan and a reason why you're taking action, can often lead to frustration as well.

The problem isn't a shortage of good ideas. They're everywhere. You'll easily find an abundance of things to add to your to-do list. The step that most authors stumble over is not choosing the best ideas and, most importantly, not acting on them.

So here's what I want you to do right now. Visit a library, bookstore or websites such as my own www.FullTimeAuthor.com, www.BookMarket.com, www.PublishingBasics.com, www.amarketingexpert.com/blog,

www.thecreativepenn.com/blog, or www.authoritypublishing.com/blog.

As you look these over, write down the ideas that strike a chord with you. Note the concepts you can effectively apply to your genre, style or identity. Record the tactics that resonate the most with you.

Then look over this list. Hopefully, it's a lengthy one. But that doesn't matter. What you need to do now is this:

- **Pick your three favorite ideas off the list** – and no more.

Then take this important step:

- **Place these items on your calendar** – whatever you use to plan your activities.

Don't have a personal calendar? Start one. Or use a Google Calendar at www.Google.com/calendar. Whatever. The main thing is that you put a priority on them and pick a date and time when you will implement these ideas.

Don't overwhelm yourself. Work on just one idea a week. Again, put it on your calendar. And when the date arrives, get busy working on the idea. In other words, you must TAKE ACTION and bring your ideas to life. And the best way to do that is to pick one specific action item, schedule it, then do it!

Now you know the secret to book promotion success. Pretty easy, huh? Now get busy reading, writing, planning, and acting!

Thanks for reading. May all your book publishing dreams come true!

-Bob Baker

What about Bob?

Bob Baker is on a mission to help musicians, authors and creative entrepreneurs of all kinds use their talents and know-how to make a living and make a difference in the world!

He is the author of the highly acclaimed *Guerrilla Music Marketing Handbook* and several other books, including *55 Ways to Promote & Sell Your Book on the Internet*, *Unleash the Artist Within*, and *Branding Yourself Online*. He also

developed the “Music Marketing 101” course at Berkleemusic, the online continuing education division of Berklee College of Music.

Bob is an active musician, workshop leader, visual artist, and former music magazine editor who teaches creative people how to get exposure, connect with fans, and increase their incomes through their artistic passions.

Since 1995 Bob has published “The Buzz Factor” ezine, one of the first music tips email newsletters in existence. He was one of the early proponents of musicians taking their careers into their own hands and not relying on major record labels or industry gatekeepers to save them.

Visit www.TheBuzzFactor.com, www.FullTimeAuthor.com, www.DIYcareerManifesto.com and www.Bob-Baker.com for more details.

Other books and resources by Bob Baker:

Book Marketing Online: The Guerrilla Guide to Building Your Author Platform
<http://amzn.to/1h7GV8q>

The Guerrilla Guide to Book Marketing: Laying the Foundation for Indie Author Success <https://payhip.com/b/9Goi>

Mega Book Publicity: 5 Steps to Getting Free Media Exposure for Your Books
<http://amzn.to/1h5Jjsb>

The DIY Career Manifesto: The Unconventional Guide to Turning Your Talents and Know-How Into a Profitable Business
www.DIYcareerManifesto.com or <http://amzn.to/178i0xL>

55 Ways to Promote & Sell Your Book on the Internet
www.bob-baker.com/self-publish-book/55ways.html

Guerrilla Music Marketing Handbook: 201 Self-Promotion Ideas for Songwriters, Musicians and Bands on a Budget
www.bob-baker.com/buzz/guerrilla-music-marketing-handbook/

Guerrilla Music Marketing Online: 129 Free and Low-Cost Strategies to Promote & Sell Your Music on the Internet
www.bob-baker.com/buzz/guerrilla-music-marketing-online/

Unleash the Artist Within: Four Weeks to Transforming Your Creative Talents into More Recognition, More Profit and More Fun

www.bob-baker.com/buzz/unleash.html

See all of Bob's books on Amazon.com

www.bob-baker.com/books-on-amazon.html

The Guerrilla Music Marketing eCourse

www.bob-baker.com/buzz/music-marketing-ecourse.html

Social Media Marketing for Musicians

www.bob-baker.com/buzz/social-media-marketing-for-musicians/

How to Make Money as a DIY Musician

www.ruzuku.com/courses/2020/about

5 Biggest Music Publicity Mistakes (and How to Fix Them)

www.bob-baker.com/music/publicity-mistakes-signup.html

For more of Bob's music marketing tips and tools, visit

www.TheBuzzFactor.com

www.MusicPromotionBlog.com

www.Bob-Baker.com/podcast

You'll also find Bob on ...

www.Twitter.com/MrBuzzFactor

www.Facebook.com/BobBakerFanPage

www.YouTube.com/MrBuzzFactor

www.Linkedin.com/in/buzzfactor

www.Google.com/profiles/MrBuzzFactor

Finally, to see some of Bob's artwork (yes, he's a visual artist too)

www.PopRockArtStudio.com