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Book Promotion Survey 2009

Conducted between April 9, 2009 and May 27, 2009

by Giles Pettingell

www.thoughtleading.com

The Executive Summary

In terms of book promotion, there is no singular path to success. There are innumerable methods that exist to promote books, and exactly zero that can guarantee absolute success. In a business of seeming uncertainty, two nuggets of advice are generally agreed upon: don't expect anything from your publisher, and don't expect sales without tireless self-promotion. The key is to diversify your promoting tactics and to find what works for you.

While conducting a survey of emersongroup client thoughtleaders and associates who have either been book authors or involved in book publishing and promotion, I was able to answer the question of what the most successful book promotion tactic is: there isn't one! After compiling information provided by more than 20 authors, publishers, and book promoters, I found little decisive evidence that pointed to any one fool-proof method. Tactics that raked in success for some resulted only in utter failure for others. Thus, conclusions were hard to draw and contradictions omnipresent. With that said, a few suggestions did seem to stand out more than others.

Speaking engagements, for example, was a popular answer to the question of the most successful promotion tactic. Some respondents even cited speaking engagements as

a method that gives birth to new books and vice versa. Speaking gives authors a platform to promote themselves as well as their work, providing the audience with the intimate details of what makes their book so worthwhile. In addition to speaking, the use of the Internet was seen as a useful tool, trumping the importance of traditional PR (which according to publisher Arthur Chou is the least successful book promotion tactic). As was pointed out by some respondents, online ad space is far easier to come by than printed space, and comes at a reduced price. The rise of the Internet and its capabilities for promoting a book was seen as the greatest change in today's book promotion environment. By allowing your book to be purchased online, say via Amazon, one can quickly circulate it more widely than by allowing it to just sit on a bookstore shelf. Use of social networking sites is skyrocketing too, and taming these new domains seems essential to keeping up with the changing online market.

But while utilizing today's technology is essential, keeping a personal connection with customers and partners is just as vital, our survey showed. In today's market, sending a promotional email or link requires little time and effort, which in turn cuts down on the impact it has on people. Methods like direct mailing and personal letters can make all the difference and produce results. As author Rosalie Hamilton put it, "Hand-written notes, even if one can only send out a few, are received with stunned amazement and produce a very high rate of sales." This notion goes back to the basic principle that success can't be reached through one specific method, and so diversifying book promotion is a way to find out what works. One survey participant, author Stephanie Bennett Vogt, attributed poor Internet sales to the possibility that her "particular audience

is not all that savvy or comfortable with computers.” This conclusion could of course sway potential authors towards more hands-on promotion.

However, when asked about the least successful book promotion tactic, best-selling author Suzanne Bates replied, “Book signings in book stores!” This may be is the most hands-on approach there is! These contradicting accounts thus demonstrate that what works for some, may not work for others, making diversity the name of the game.

The singular response I received that seemed universal was to not expect anything from a publisher. Business development guru John Doerr, who spent many years heading a major division at book publishing firm AMACOM Books, declared, “The biggest changes that I see around are how little the publisher does for the author. There is very little assistance from the publisher. In fact, they expect you to buy books as often as not! Editing and development help is not existent as well, so you had better be an excellent writer too.” This harps on the same reoccurring message I continued to receive, that successful book promotion comes only from ceaseless work by the author him/herself. From what I’ve also been able to pick up from this survey, that endless promotion can be turned into success at a higher rate if careful planning pre-dates a book release.

After contemplating all the results, this survey’s responses have driven me to conclude the following formula for success: Before releasing your book, come up with a target audience list. Who is this book intended for? And who will be most likely to purchase it? Answering such questions can help authors come up with a target promotion list outlining the best methods to use for promoting your particular book.

Make sure too that some of this promotion is done *before* your book comes out so that anticipation and media presence can build around its release. From here on, according to our survey, everything seems to become a matter of trial and error. Dabble in different areas to find what works for you. Research books similar to your own and see whom they target and how they are being promoted. A solid mix of traditional PR and unique or even unproven online marketing seems necessary, so don't be afraid to introduce an element of creativity.

One last piece of the puzzle seems to be timing. A book about barbecuing wouldn't sell very well during a mad cow disease scare, nor would a guide to purchasing aircraft sell well following a major airplane crash. This element is obviously unpredictable and impossible to control. However, it is nonetheless something to keep in mind when planning a book release.

In the end, the world of book promotion can't be understood and conquered overnight. It takes constant work to keep up with changing technology and trends. No two promotional campaigns produce the same results even if they utilize the exact same methods. It therefore all comes down to finding your own way and constantly working to improve your selling techniques. The road to book promotion success may seem long but progress can only be achieved, our respondents suggest, by learning from failure.

Submitted by Giles Pettingell
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Respondents to Our Survey

Suzanne Bates

Author of “Motivate Like a CEO: Communicate Your Strategic Vision and Inspire People to Act!”

Meredith O'Connor

Marketing Director for Suzanne Bates

Lewis Green

Author of “How to Grow a Business by Putting People First”

Robert Simpkins

Author of “Not Another Pretty Binder: Strategic Planning That Actually Works”

Jim Ramerman

Co-author of “Why Dogs Wag Their Tails: Lessons Leaders Can Learn About Work, Joy, and Life”

Lisa DiTullio

Author of “Simple Solutions: How ‘Enterprise Project Management’ Supported Harvard Pilgrim Health Care’s Journey from Near Collapse to #1”

Michael Yogg

Author of “Passion for Reality: Paul Cabot and the Boston Mutual Fund”

Drew Stevens

Author of “Pump Up Your Productivity”

Stephanie Bennett Vogt

Author of “Your Spacious Self: Clear Your Clutter and Discover Who You Are”

Michael Shenkman

Author of “The Strategic Heart: Using the New Science to Lead Growing Organizations”

John W. Myrna

Author of “Where the Hell Are We?”

Vicki Donlan

Author of “Her Turn: Why It's Time for Women to Lead in America”

Donya Dickerson

Author of “Guide to Literary Agents 2001: 570 Agents Who Sell What You Write”
Senior Editor, McGraw-Hill

Sal Vittolino

Vittolino PR Consulting

Jeff Olson

Author of “The Slight Edge: Secret to a Successful Life”
Senior Editor, Praeger Press

Josh Itzoe

Author of “Fixing the 401(k): What Fiduciaries Must Know (And Do) to Help
Employees Retire Successfully”

Josh Gordon

Author of “Presentations that Change Minds: Strategies to Persuade, Convince, and Get
Results”

Leonard Fuld

Author of “The Secret Language of Competitive Intelligence: How to See Through &
Stay Ahead of Business Disruptions, Distortions, Rumors, & Smoke Screens”

Debbi Kickham

Author of “Off The Wall Marketing Ideas: Jumpstart Your Sales without Busting Your
Budget”

Jan Phillips

Author of “The Art of Original Thinking: The Making of a Thought Leader”

Rosalie Hamilton

Author of “The Expert Witness Marketing Book: How to Promote Your Forensic Practice
in a Professional and Cost-Effective Manner”

Doug Hardy

Co-author of “Monster Careers: How to Land the Job of Your life”

John Doerr

President, Wellesley Hills Group
Former Publisher, AMACOM Books

Carl Friesen

Author of “Writing Magazine Articles”

Arthur Chou

Publisher, WBiz Books

Suzanne Lowe

Author of “Marketplace Masters: How Professional Service Firms Compete to Win”

Our Questions

We asked the respondents to our survey these five questions.

1. What have you found to be the most successful book promotion tactic?
2. What have you found to be the least successful book promotion tactic?
3. If you could go back and re-do your most recent book promotion campaign, what would you do differently?
4. If you have been published before, have you noticed any difference in today's environment from the last time you promoted a book?
5. Is there anything else you'd like to share on this subject?

Their Answers

What have you found to be the most successful book promotion tactic?

A best seller campaign. I've done it twice. We recruit authors, experts and others with strong email lists, ask them to promote the book on a particular day, and invite them to contribute "gifts" to those who purchase the book. Their gifts can be anything downloadable such as an article, tip sheet, audio program; or time gifts like free coaching. This drives traffic to their web sites and helps us raise our rankings on amazon.com and barnesandnoble.com.

-Suzanne Bates

The most successful book promotion tactic has been our PR efforts. By getting our excerpts and author's bylines in popular business publications, we've had the books in the hands of corporate decision makers, who in turn have hired us to do coaching and training work.

-Meredith O'Connor

Two strategies have worked best for promotions Building a Business by Putting People First—blog reviews by my peers and making presentations on subjects within the book. The third strategy that has worked at a lesser success level is my blog and published articles.

-Lewis Green

Three activities:

1. Promotion of the book to existing customers and associates through direct contact, training programs or speaking engagements.
2. Articles published in major periodicals (It's only an instinct, though, since I have no way to measure it).
3. Making sure the book is well placed on Amazon. They are the back office for almost all other major book resellers worldwide and as they go, so goes the industry. HRD Press was very sloppy in the original placement. This may not seem like a "tactic" to you, but it probably contributed to most of the sales.

-Robert Simpkins

Our own presentations to large groups/conferences. Esp. when we do a large group of 100 and the book is purchased as part of the program.

-Jim Ramerman

I keep a very full speaking calendar; every time I speak to a group, I have the opportunity to promote my book, resulting in real sales.

I always carry a book or two with me when traveling, you never know when you are going to meet someone along the way—I recently sold a number of copies after meeting someone in the airport. (I also keep a few copies in my trunk, for the very same reason.)

I personally do not care for back of the room sales, however.

I constantly seek opportunities to have the book reviewed---a recent review in a trade publication created incredible traffic to my website and a number of book purchases.

-Lisa DiTullio

Sending copies of the book to influential individuals in the hope they will write a review or mention the book in an article.

-Michael Yogg

Something I call marketing athletics. I have 18 principles that I use weekly to ensure instant credibility, promotion and marketing. My thoughts in a fast moving market you cannot be a spectator it requires being in the field of play constantly.

-Drew Stevens

I'm not sure that my own book promo tactics have been all that successful. Probably the best has been via my workshops and talks and my quarterly newsletters. I developed an entire web site <http://www.yourspaciousself.org/>, a flash movie, a free 30-day email series, a free mini-course, and a full companion online course to promote my book in many different ways, but it's hard to say the effect it's having on actual sales. The only data I have is that I receive about 2-3 subscriptions a week to my free 30-day email series. Probably the most successful route I've taken that was worth every penny spent would be the "Social Networking Tour" with AME [Author Marketing Experts]. Whether it generated sales, I'm not certain, but I sure learned a LOT and it got me up to speed with social networking and blogging and beefing up my Web site (something I sorely needed).

-Stephanie Bennett Vogt

Using the book directly in my work, as texts. Giving them away at speaking events. Lowers inventory anyway. The newsletter is a surrogate for this. Way less effective, but it's something. A website is the most important thing.

-Michael Shenkman

Bundling them with a talk. Using them in a workshop

-John W. Myrna

Doing everything myself

-Vicki Donlan

Speaking

-Donya Dickerson

Press releases based on the most recent topical news, using points from the book to illustrate the author's expertise. These must be no longer than two typewritten pages, and e-mailed to highly customized media lists -- those reporters, editors, bloggers, etc. who cover the topic or field. It also helps a lot if the PR person has existing relationships with these media.

-Sal Vittolini

Best thing is to get a review in a national journal. But you can't order those up on demand! Next best (from an editor's point of view) is to sign up an author who is out speaking and pushing his book in some way.

-Jeff Olson

I've used the book as a basis for booking speaking engagements. This has been a great avenue to promote the book. Also, I maintain a blog at www.fixingthe401k.com and have been able to get some other high-traffic bloggers to read the book and write reviews. This has helped tremendously from a promotion standpoint.

-Josh Itzoe

Sending out long press releases that are really articles that a lazy editor can pop into their magazine with little or no trouble.

-Josh Gordon

Consider the online media for pr. The printed press has fewer and fewer pages nowadays.

-Leonard Fuld

One highly effective tactic is to mention specific brands and companies in your book, if you can. That way, you can partner with that brand afterwards, for marketing and promotion. That company could promote you in their newsletters and other communications, and may even bundle your book with their product. When I wrote I LOVE MEN IN TASSELED LOAFERS, (Quinlan Press, 1988) I partnered with the Allen-Edmonds shoe company. They promoted me in their company newsletter, and arranged for a book-signing for me in Nordstrom in the men's shoe department. They also gave me men's shoes to give as prizes at my book-signing events. They also supplied me with empty shoe boxes -- I put my press kits in the shoe boxes, and even rolled up and tied my press releases with actual laces and tassels from Allen Edmonds. My kits were so successful that Boston University gave them an award. I also partnered with Pappagallo, and this woman's shoe company provided me with shoes to wear on-camera. My literary promotional tactics are so good, I have spoken to the Author's Guild and to the National Writer's Union, to help other authors promote their books. My business, Maxima Marketing, also masterminds marketing and public relations for all types of clients (www.MarketinAuthor.com). I also created a drink cocktail, The Tasseled Loafer, which was served at all of my events, and I worked with Marie Brizard liqueurs, and got PR in all of the beverage trade journals and hotel publications. My current book is a bestseller, OFF THE WALL MARKETING IDEAS (Adams Media, 2000), which even today, is doing very well, as I'm still marketing and promoting it.

-Debbi Kickham

Speak to a group and have book available for sale; put out monthly newsletter with juicy excerpts from book for web sales

-Jan Phillips

E-mail campaigns and postal mailings. Word-of-mouth resulting from extensive networking and promotion. Initially, at publication time, sent a review copy in a media kit to a large number of industry-related associations, proposing a resale arrangement. Even some of the ones who didn't choose to resell publicized the book to their members.

-Rosalie Hamilton

Online marketing – if you have an in-house list or can get access to good ones
Reviews by bloggers (time consuming but gets search engines going)
Setting up a micro-web site for the book
Speaking engagements (chicken and the egg thing in that the book can get you more speeches)

-John Doerr

Having copies available at the back when doing speeches; also using the book as a door prize which allows me to wave it around at the audience. I tell them that the first person who can grab hold of their own business card and hold it out to me, gets the book.

-Carl Friesen

Best way to promote books is via public speaking engagements. Especially sales topics.

-Arthur Chou

Also displaying expertise on news and news magazine shows — local television.

-Doug Hardy

My electronic newsletter. Closely following that, and related to it, include my blog posts, and my differentiation self-assessment test, featured on my website and electronic newsletter. Following that, I'd say another successful book promotion tactic for me is the combined speaking engagement/book signing. Everywhere I went to speak, I signed – and still sign – copies of my first book. A month ago, I signed copies of my 2004 book right next to David Gergen, who was hawking his new book.

-Suzanne Lowe

What have you found to be the least successful book promotion tactic?

Book signings in book stores. Unless you are a big name author, only your family and friends attend.

-Suzanne Bates

The least successful tactic was sending out postcards via direct mail re: the book. We didn't see any direct correlation between that and interest/book sales.

-Meredith O'Connor

Word of Mouth Marketing

-Lewis Green

Press releases and anything HRD did to promote the book.

-Robert Simpkins

Book signings without enough promotion.

-Jim Ramerman

E-mail and Internet

-Michael Yogg

Selling hardcopies of books and selling in the back of the room. The recession and the new generation are not interested in buying books. People want to gain free information and in my market are not willing to pay for self development.

-Drew Stevens

Probably the companion online course, which hasn't sold well at all. Could be the economy or that my particular audience is not all that savvy or comfortable with computers. The "Blogging Tour" with AME was a bust. The "Virtual Author Tour" with AME didn't seem to do anything at all for me either.

-Stephanie Bennett Vogt

PR, Advertising. PR has value for completely different reasons than book promo. Advertising has no value for books like mine.

-Michael Shenkman

Expecting anything from the publisher

-Vicki Donlan

Not doing anything to promote the book or waiting too long

-Donya Dickerson

Bylined articles. They take too much time to do, and unless they are for a really great media outlet -- related to Harvard Business Review somehow -- they don't deliver the marketing bang for the buck. Most higher-level media (Fortune, Business Week, Wall Street Journal) rarely accept bylined unless you're a "name"

-Sal Vittolini

Just having books on a conference table. If it just lies there, it's dead. But it can come to life thanks to hand selling. Not sure about radio phone ins--just one or two doesn't make much of a dent.

-Jeff Olson

The least successful tactic is simply to think "if I write it, people will come". Unless you're a New York Times bestseller, the only person who is going to promote your book is you. I've found that when I am thoughtful and proactive about getting the word out about the book it has a positive impact. When I do nothing in the way of promotion, I get no interest.

-Josh Itzoe

Working with your publisher. They should help but don't.

-Josh Gordon

Get a good publicist; don't rely on the publisher. It has a large list of books to promote and yours is only one among many.

-Leonard Fuld

Advertising; paying for airport placement

-Jan Phillips

Relaxing, ceasing to actively promote.

-Rosalie Hamilton

Direct mail – most books do not have a high enough price tag to defend the cost

Hiring a publicist – unless you are high profile already not worth it

Sending the book to CEOs in hopes they will see it and recommend to their company – they get a book a day and it never makes it to their eyes

-John Doerr

Worst way to sell books is via traditional PR. We even discontinued our Cision subscription because publicity and PR just don't seem to work at all. One author of ours did 30 radio shows and they didn't seem to have any effect.

-Arthur Chou

The development of old-fashioned press kits, including press releases, headshot and a photo of the book jacket cover. I used this technique as a test for the publication of my first book in 2004. Compared to all my E-marketing investments for that book, the traditional press kit was a real bomb. Also, I wouldn't exactly apply a strict return on investment measurement to holding a book party. The book party for my first book just felt like a wonderful reason to gather dear friends and close colleagues together. But as for calling it a promotion "success," it wasn't.

-Suzanne Lowe

If you could go back and re-do your most recent book promotion campaign, what would you do differently?

The first book, I wish I had gone out of the gate sooner with a strong PR/marketing campaign. I learned from that experience with the second book, and hired several PR firms for their specialty areas. This time we worked with Ken to get placements in business publications; we worked with a social media firm; and we worked with a local PR firm to get television, radio and general media placement. It was very effective.

-Suzanne Bates

We recently did a best seller campaign where we coordinated with 25+ other authors to get the book to the top of the charts on amazon.com and bn.com. If we had to do it again, I would have started earlier in getting other authors to collaborate, because it was a big effort on everyone's part and many people couldn't participate because they were just too busy.

-Meredith O'Connor

If I had time, I would work diligently to get on the speaker's circuit. That's pretty difficult for someone running a business.

-Lewis Green

I would be less dependent on HRD (the publisher who did nothing) and spend some of the funds on an advertising campaign in two major periodicals read by business professionals; the Wall Street Journal and USA Today.

Also, I would be more aggressive in writing articles for major periodicals prior to the release of the book

-Robert Simpkins

Set up aggressive public-speaking aligned with the book from the outset.

-Jim Ramerman

I would not offer a hard-cover version.

-Lisa DiTullio

I would not purchase any service from the press (Xlibris)

-Michael Yogg

I would invest heavily and gain access to bookshops using the Gitomer model, he has become a master of this. Or if possible use an outside service to buyout books so that they are reordered in bookstores.

-Drew Stevens

I would invest much less time and energy and money into online programs and marketing experts. Though my work with Penny Sansevieri of "Author Marketing Experts" was valuable (see above), I would probably NOT hire them again. I'm disappointed in that their efforts did not meet my goals, they did not explain things or follow-up very well, they were not always available, especially at the end. It was a very expensive lesson.

In the future I'm going to be more wary and discerning whether (or how) I use experts. I would simplify and rely more on the marketing and social networking tools I have learned: blogging (which I do faithfully 2 times a week), twittering, facebooking, and submitting articles online wherever possible, like EzineArticles. I might reduce my free email series to 15 days (instead of 30). I wouldn't hesitate to publish through iUniverse again. They were a class act and they DID deliver the goods in spades!

-Stephanie Bennett Vogt

More speaking events, personal appearances. But that takes a tremendous investment to pull off. Hard to say. Getting in front of people and animating the ideas in the book, in real life, is the key.

-Michael Shenkman

I'm really pretty happy with the way it is turning out. The problem is the timing; it's a coaching-related book in an outplacement (layoff) related economy. It will get better publicity as the economy improves.

-Sal Vittolini

You rarely know what went wrong. Again, with so much stuff competing for attention, it's almost a miracle when the book gets noticed by anyone.

-Jeff Olson

I would have tried to create much more awareness prior to the launch of the book.

-Josh Itzoe

I'd tell them to keep the lousy couple of thousand bucks they pay me to write the book, and put it in to facings at bookstores.

-Josh Gordon

Set up more speaking gigs and radio interviews

-Jan Phillips

Include even more testimonials.

-Rosalie Hamilton

Not rely on the publisher to do anything at all

-John Doerr

I'd do more of it. More speaking gigs, more copies out for review, more articles based on the book.

-Carl Friesen

I would have more aggressive promotion in narrower categories, such as b2b marketing at the intended audience. I would have gone with a publisher less dependent on bookstore sales.

-Doug Hardy

For my 2004 book, I allocated 50% investment to traditional public relations, and 50% to electronic marketing, using many of what we now call Web 2.0 tactics. For my soon to be published second book, I will not use any traditional PR tactics. It will be all Web 2.0 tactics with a stronger emphasis on search engine optimization and co promotion opportunities.

-Suzanne Lowe

If you have been published before, have you noticed any difference in today's environment from the last time you promoted a book?

My first book was published in 2005, the second in 2009, and frankly I haven't noticed any difference.

-Suzanne Bates

It's hard to gauge whether the differences are due to the topic of the books, or the economy. In 2005, Suzanne Bates published "Speak Like a CEO" and that book got huge book sales and traction. However, I think that was more due to the fact that the topic resonated with a more general public than her current book ("Motivate like a CEO") does. I'm sure the economy does take part in it though. I've noticed that most of the best sellers on amazon.com and the like recently are directly related to the economy (in the titles, etc.).

-Meredith O'Connor

Yes. My first four books were in traditional book stores. It never occurred to me that my current publisher wouldn't distribute to bookstores. I would never again publish with anyone offering only online sales.

-Lewis Green

The environment is very different and challenging. My first book was published by AMACOM in 2004 and the second one was released by HRD Press in late 2008. Although I don't think AMACOM did a great job, but they have been much more aggressive in promoting the book internationally. The greatest change has been in the globalization of knowledge resources, and the hegemonic rise of Amazon. Also, AMACOM set up radio interviews and HRD set up nothing.

-Robert Simpkins

Yes most definitely, ebooks are most popular as are audio books. I am beginning to use this strategy more as I develop new products and services.

-Drew Stevens

No similarity between when I started publishing 20 years ago and now. For one thing, fewer people read. Don't "have time." Second tons more books out there on any subject. Hard to get daylight unless you have Fox news pumping up their fictions.

-Michael Shenkman

It's ever harder due to self-publishing. There were 175,000 titles published last year. Everyone wants shelf space and mind space, and it's really hard to get.

-Jeff Olson

Yes. There was a huge shift between my 3rd and 4th book being published. Publicity and, in large part distribution, all moved to the web. The day my 4th book got spotlighted on Fast Company's blog, my book shot up to 281 on Amazon.com

-Josh Gordon

Yes -- Today you need to use the social media such as Facebook and Twitter.

-Debbi Kickham

Much more competition

-Jan Phillips

Increased online communication. However, this very evolution makes postal mail stand out. And hand-written notes, even if one can only send out a few, are received with stunned amazement and produce a very high rate of sales.

-Rosalie Hamilton

I have not been published before, but I did head up a business book publishing firm for years. The biggest changes that I see are around how little the publisher does for the author. There is very little assistance from the publisher; in fact, they expect you to buy books as often as not. The editing and development help is not existent as well so you had better be an excellent writer. And this is from a major business book publisher. The economics are tough for the publishers – even more so than before.

-John Doerr

Everyone's running scared. Money is very tight and imaginations are small.

-Doug Hardy

The breakdown of traditional gatekeeping in leading media. It used to be that you had to buy a press list through Bacon's, develop a traditional press release and hope that you can get through to an editorial decision maker. Now, things are much more fluid, with journalists putting out their editorial requests through their own social media networking, including Help A Reporter Out. (HARO). I've also noticed how little it matters that one is published by a "branded publisher." In my own self-publishing journey, featuring case studies from some of the world's most prestigious professional service firms, I was asked a total of zero times who my publisher was. There seems to be no benefit to being published by a brand-name publisher. What's more, my level of promotion control is going to be 100%, versus 0% for my first book.

-Suzanne Lowe

Is there anything else you'd like to share on this subject?

I would recommend to all writers that they consider moving to a Print-On-Demand publisher. Traditional publishers do nothing today and, in fact, the POD publishers actually do more and are far less frustrating. It may cost a little more up front, but they perform their function much more efficiently and effectively. Traditional publishers are working themselves out of a job. Secondly, I would recommend that all writers develop a business plan for promotion of the book. Not just a bullet list of activities, but a real plan.

-Robert Simpkins

Be relentless in finding ways to promote your book and to make it visible to others.

-Lisa DiTullio

Do not only use books for a marketing effort, today's competitive market warrants a willingness to go the extra mile for differentiation. New strategies and constant marketing are keys to success in the expert business.

-Drew Stevens

I have really come to question the value of publishing hard copy books -- I do not question writing them, however. If you have to write, write. It's a great thing to do when business is slow. But just put it up on the web. The same 1000 people will read it from there as will buy it. If you want money for it, use Paypal. It is a shame really that the Web is what it has come down to. Blogs are so brain stem; and now there's twitter; pretty soon it will be, what ... gut sounds? Culturally, it seems at the moment, we are headed in exactly the wrong direction. Just when we need an ability to deeply evaluate, reorient and redirect our cognitive skills we are giving up on even using them. Maybe we who write and read have to be content with talking among ourselves, keep going until some other flash of insight opens up new avenues for reading (or something else), writing (or something else) and learning.

I still love books though.

-Michael Shenkman

In my experience publishers haven't got a clue on how to market a book or a speaker. They actually have little clue about anything but printing and there is a huge gap between getting a great book and great speaker out there to make money and printing a book.

-Vicki Donlan

It's critical to a book's success to partner with a publisher to promote the book. An author's platform can make a big difference in getting initial buy in from a book from a major retailer.

-Donya Dickerson

Web sites sponsored by the author and devoted to a book (or a number of books) seem to make a difference.

-Jeff Olson

Writing a book has been the single best investment I have ever made in my career. It has given me credibility as an expert, has led to numerous speaking engagements and media placement (primarily written interviews), enabled me to build a brand around the book, and helped me land a number of new clients. If I'm honest, I didn't expect it to have this magnitude of impact.

-Josh Itzoe

Think web, start a blog, send out your own newsletter and build a database. "Selling" books is for losers. Instead, build a tribe or database and lead them to your book. Jeffrey Gitomer who sells more sales books than anyone I know told me it comes down to three things;

(1) The right product--fight with your publisher to create a book that reads well BUT ALSO looks and feels like a great product you'd like to own. Think about what Apple products look like

(2) In the right place--facings at books stores sell, online campaigns will sell through Amazon. Don't kid yourself about the better mousetrap and people beating a path to your door. If your book is not promoted, no one will know about it, if they don't know about they won't buy it.

(3) THE RIGHT PROMOTION LIST.

-Josh Gordon

Buy yourself a copy of the Gebbie Press media directory so that you have contact info for all of the top media. Or subscribe to Cision media directories, they're indispensable.

-Debbi Kickham

Find other ways to share wisdom...multi-media; youtube, social networking

-Jan Phillips

Not that this is news to you, but, for most of us, a business book does not constitute a significant piece of revenue. It is, instead, (noted accurately as) an important, sometimes impressive piece of work and accomplishment, which reflects highly on the abilities, knowledge and skills of the author. This translates into industry awareness and respect and, hence, revenue-producing business in whatever field the author works.

-Rosalie Hamilton

It is too early for me to comment on the full effect of having published a book, but it can make a huge difference for your practice – and it does make a difference to have reputable publisher publish the work as opposed to self-publishing. Just be prepared to do almost all the work yourself. Or maybe even all the work.

-John Doerr

Have a plan about how to market and sell the book before you write the book. No point writing the thing and getting it published if it won't sell (unless it's a pure credential-building exercise).

-Carl Friesen

You have to be a multimedia presence – books are incidental to general branding of yourself as the expert in the subject across print, online, radio and television.

-Doug Hardy

Probably implied in my previous comments, but let me unveil the obvious: there's a lot about promoting a book that is still on the shoulders of the author. The responsibility to promote a book hasn't changed since 2004, when my first book was published. I've been on the receiving end of promotion efforts by prominent authors publishing their latest book with prominent publishing houses. Even in these situations, the author is in the trenches, creating his own promotion opportunities.

-Suzanne Lowe