

WEDNESDAY, February 11, 2014 • 7PM

Everything You Need to Know For A Successful Book Signing

For many authors, planning a book-signing event is a lot less fun than having a root canal. In truth, it can be terrifying. But book signings, readings and book fairs are not just an opportunity to sell your books, they allow you to get out and meet your readers. Smart authors use them to bring together existing fans and drive new readers.



Robin Theiss



Kristina Blank Makansi



Brad R. Cook

MEET THE PANEL

Robin Theiss is the owner of StLBooks, an independent bookstore in Kirkwood and online. It specializes in high quality literature for adults and children and St. Louis books. The company is devoted to the advancement of the literary arts.

Robin has served on the board of the Missouri Writers Guild and is a past president of the St. Louis Writers Guild.

Kristina Blank Makansi co-founded Blank Slate Press, an award-winning small publisher, in 2010 and Treehouse Author Services in 2012. She has years of experience working as a copywriter, editor, marketing coordinator and designer. Kristina is the author of *Oracles Of Delphi* and co-author of *The Sowing* and *The Reaping*, books one and two of the *Seeds Trilogy*.

Brad R. Cook, author of *Iron Horsemen*, a steampunk adventure, has spent nearly a decade as an advocate for writers. In that time he served as president of the St. Louis Writers Guild, publisher and acquisitions editor for Blank Slate Press, festival coordinator, podcaster, blogger, freelance copywriter, designer and book formatter. Not to mention his time in the corporate world as a technical writer and IT consultant. He is a founding contributor to *The Writers' Lens*, a resource blog for writers, and *Write Pack Radio*, a weekly podcast airing every Sunday. ■

- Where should you have your book signing?
- What is the best way to approach the bookstore?
- What kind of marketing materials do you need?
- What should you do if no one turns up?
- How many books should you bring?
- How do you select a passage to read?
- Should you send out a press release to local media?
- What is the best way to follow up after your event?

This month's panel of experts know a thing or two about planning, marketing and hosting a book signing event that is fun, successful and profitable. They promise strategies, tips and oodles of practical guidelines that everyone from first timers to experienced authors will find useful.

With their advice, you'll shake off your book signing nerves and your event will go without a hitch.

Ten Ways Authors Can Help Bookstores Hold A Successful Signing

By Kristina Blank Makansi

1. Communication is the most important part of planning your book signing. Liaise with the bookstore's representative and ask for the store's help with publicity. Don't forget to tell your fans, friends and family about your upcoming event.
2. Plan ahead to give everyone plenty of time to "mark their calendars." Use your mailing list and social media to get the word out as far and wide as possible. No one will attend if they don't know about the event.
3. Let the bookstore know if you'll need help setting up and how many folks you're expecting to attend. If you need a projector, table or easel, let them know in plenty of time. If you've got props or marketing materials you can send to the store ahead of time to promote the event, get them to the store well before the signing date.
4. If you get delayed, call the bookstore with your anticipated arrival time.

(Ten Ways continued on page 2)

Mark Your Calendar...
March 11th

PERFECT PITCH: ELEVATOR PITCHES FOR AUTHORS

Whether talking to a fan, friend or a stranger in that imaginary elevator, having a brief description of your book at the ready means you can promote your book with ease any time an opportunity presents itself.

See you in March.

We Are Moving

Our beloved Brentwood Community Center is getting a facelift so our March meeting is our last at this location.

From April, SLPA's meetings will be held at the Richmond Heights Community Center, 8001 Dale Ave., Richmond Heights, MO 63117.

As always, doors will open at 6:30 p.m. and the program will begin at 7 p.m. ■



THE BOOK CORNER

Your Cash Is Flowing: Why every entrepreneur needs to think like a CFO

by Kenneth M. Homza

Kenneth believes that the financial intelligence of most entrepreneurs is far too low.

While entrepreneurs and business owners are passionate about their companies, too many lack the financial acumen to drive their enterprises to remarkable levels of success. Although they have traded the day-to-day employment rat race for the freedom, flexibility and risks of entrepreneurship, many have failed to achieve the appropriate financial reward.

This book is filled with thought-provoking examples, real life experiences, tactics and methodologies that drive profitability. Readers will want to keep this book nearby as they increase their financial IQs and see profits increase from month to month and year to year.

Kenneth is a leading fractional chief financial officer (CFO) who has worked with more than thirty companies to solve business problems, turn losses into profits, and achieve organizational goals. This book is available on Amazon.

Leveraging Amazon Kindle for More Exposure



At our January meeting, Will Hanke, Red Canoe Media, showed us how to get the most out of Amazon and how to load an e-book to Amazon Kindle Direct Publishing. Here is a link to his presentation on SlideShare.

http://www.slideshare.net/WillHanke/leveraging-amazon-kindle-for-more-exposure?qid=45791326-e84d-4e7fb5d2-5c907b1dc68d&v=default&b=&from_search=1

(Ten Ways continued from page 1)

5. Arrive BEFORE the event starts and be organized. If you're doing a reading, have your pages marked and organized BEFORE you arrive. If you're talking about process, plot or you have subject matter expertise, have notes prepared and make sure you don't talk too long and go over your time allocation.
6. Bring goodies such as bookmarks or fun giveaways to hand out. But don't have "Available at Amazon" on bookmarks you're giving away at a brick and mortar bookstore or you won't be asked back. The bookstore is doing you a favor by hosting you and you should encourage readers to purchase books there.
7. Make sure you have a spare pen (Sharpies or something else that doesn't smear) and a notepad so people can write down how to spell their names — and so you can keep track of the folks you meet.
8. Most bookstores will provide bottled water, but bring your own just in case.
9. Talk to customers and employees and don't expect to be treated like a VIP. If you are engaging and friendly to customers and staff, customers will be more likely to take a chance on your book and store employees will be more likely to promote your book. Hand selling by bookstore employees is one of the best ways for your book to gain traction. That said, the staff is there to work so it is best not to monopolize their time or keep them from doing their job. And if a customer is not interested in your book, that's okay. Not every book is for every reader.
10. Bring extra books just in case the store runs out or a customer is interested in one of your previous books not featured at the signing. Also be prepared to stay after to sign books for the store shelves.
11. **BONUS TIP** Bring bookplates to sign if you can't bring extra books. You can sign these and leave them with the store so a customer can order a book and pick up the bookplate when they get their copy. ■

Questions About SLPA?

Contact membership chair:

Peggy Nehmen

membership@stlouispublishers.org

SLPA Meets on the Second Wednesday of the Month

BRENTWOOD COMMUNITY CENTER
2505 S. Brentwood Blvd., Room 101

Doors open for networking at 6:30 p.m. and meeting begins at 7 p.m. The formal meeting concludes at about 8:30 p.m. with networking until 9 p.m.

Regular meetings are free to members. Guests — \$10 at the door, cash or check only.

SLPA NEWS & VIEWS

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MEMBERS: Do you have a new book you would like to announce? For more information, email Janette Lonsdale at communications@stlouispublishers.org