



## September 8 Meeting at Brentwood Community Center Getting your books to market

A good book distributor provides three interdependent services: Sales, Marketing and Distribution. Find out more about how to work with a company that provides these services at our next meeting.

While it's fairly easy to list your book on Amazon, getting it into a brick-and-mortar bookstore can be difficult for a brand new self-published author. That's when a good book distributor can help. A distributor is the intermediary between the publisher and a store's category buyers. Distributors put books in catalogs and send sales staff to pitch books to bookstore buyers. They are experts in wholesale book marketing and moving books into stores from warehouses. They can also negotiate contacts with stores for special sales, in-store displays, and any type of special promotion for books. Of course, all this service comes at a price, so you do need to budget for this kind of help.

Publishing is a tough business, especially now. A successful self-published book has several ingredients: a good idea, a good book and a hard-working author who will promote it. Even then it doesn't guarantee success. But teaming with a good distributor will help give your book every chance to succeed.

### Featured speaker: Dan Thompson, Big River Distribution

Dan Thompson, President of Big River Distribution and co-founder of BlueBird Publishing, Inc., is a seasoned executive who has over thirty years sales, marketing and distribution in the music, film, and book businesses here in St. Louis. A native of Webster Groves with a bachelor's degree from Webster University, Dan has worked to strengthen the cultural climate of St. Louis and the surrounding regions through his various business endeavors.



His career has been diverse. Ranging from a position with sales and purchasing at Pickwick Records to an account executive for MCA Universal. In 1980, he founded the video wholesale division of St. Louis based Sound-Disc, and named it "Sight & Sound" Distributing. This company opened the

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## SLPA seeks 2011 board nominations

Every October, we present a slate of nominees for election to our board. At the November meeting, all board positions are elected by the membership. The all-volunteer board keeps our organization operating to fulfill the SLPA's mission of helping members produce quality products and market them effectively.



If you've found the SLPA to be helpful to your publishing endeavors, why not give back? Consider serving on the board of directors. We meet once a month to plan programs, develop marketing opportunities, and handle administrative tasks. Board members also are the public face of the SLPA.

### Board positions are:

- President
- Vice-president
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Membership chairman
- Communications manager
- Publicity manager
- Webmaster
- Display coordinator

To nominate yourself or someone else, send an e-mail to board president Ligaya Figueras at [president@stlouispublishers.org](mailto:president@stlouispublishers.org). Questions? Contact a current board member. You can find their name and contact information online at [www.stlouispublishers.org/boardMem.php](http://www.stlouispublishers.org/boardMem.php).

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## Big Read is big opportunity for publishers


Bring your family, friends, and fans to **The Big Read in Clayton on October 9**. This is the fifth year for this family-friendly event that celebrates the joys of reading. Mark your calendars,



and set your PDAs, iPods and computer calendars to remind you to take this day as a working holiday!

Here's how to get the most out of The Big Read if you attend:

- Carry your title so everyone can see the front cover.
- Bring your spouse, kids, friends and fans! Ask them to wear a t-shirt that has your book cover on the front and back. Don't forget to cover their sleeves with large button-pins with your book cover on it; these make for great conversation pieces and giveaways. Remember to have your contact information on everything.
- Proudly browse and chit-chat your way through the booths of fellow authors and writers. Exchange business cards with them as passersby overhear conversations about your book!
- Do you have trading cards, magnets, post cards, bookmarks, flyers, and pens to distribute? If you act now, there's time to prepare your handouts, freebies and at-home reminders of your book.
- Be sure to bring a few extra copies of your title(s) as local celebrities and news reporters are often seen strolling through the booths. Perhaps they would enjoy reading a complimentary autographed copy.
- You should plan to take a break at the author tent and storytelling tents. Of course, your book will be sitting proudly in your lap for all to see. What an interesting conversation piece while you are waiting for the next speaker! Perhaps you can even make a quick sale!
- Don't forget to visit the food court. Remember, the people behind the counter are readers, too.
- You should also attend some of the seminars and readings. The person you are sitting next to may not have heard what was said or arrived late and needs to be brought up to speed. And lucky you will be there to help them. Introduce yourself as a successful publisher-author and a member of SLPA—an expert!
- Remember, multiple and personal exposures will sell the most.
- Consider participating in the SLPA co-op bookselling booth. For one small fee your book will be displayed face out and available for purchase!

The deadline for participating in the SLPA Co-Op Booth is Wednesday, October 6, 2010. To join the festivities and have your book showcased in the SLPA co-op booth, or for more information, rules and entry form, visit the St. Louis Publishers Association Web site. For questions and drop-off arrangements, contact Barbara Davis at (636) 448-9821 or e-mail at [DisplayCoordinator@stlouispublishers.org](mailto:DisplayCoordinator@stlouispublishers.org). Put "2010 Co-Op Booth" in the subject line. 

## Getting your books to market ... *continued*

first video rental stores in St. Louis. Dan then became an Executive Consultant and VP with Ingram Corporation where he launched their entertainment division in Nashville. He later founded his own "regional" CD music distribution and manufacturing company called Blue Sky Distribution and Media Services. In 2006, Thompson founded Big River Distribution to support and sell "regional" books throughout the Midwest and nationally.

### Our new monthly meeting location:




We are moving our regular monthly meeting location to provide easier parking and a quieter setting for our meetings. We still meet on the second Wednesday of the month, but

beginning with our September 8 meeting, our new "home" will be the Brentwood Community Center.


Brentwood Community Center  
2505 S. Brentwood Boulevard  
Brentwood, MO 63144

Doors open for networking at 6:30 PM, meeting begins at 7:00 PM. The formal meeting concludes at about 8:30 with networking continuing after the meeting.

Our regular meetings are free to Members.

Guests - \$10.00 at the door, cash or check only. 

## Jewish writers are sought

Local Jewish writers are invited to submit works for a new anthology, including fiction, poetry, folklore, life stories, essays, modern midrashim and art. The deadline for submissions is September 30th. Submission guidelines are at the Saul Brodsky Jewish Community Library website: <http://brodskylibrary.org/info.php>. For more information, call 314-442-3720. 

## DON'T MISS THIS: Saturday, November 13 at the Sheraton-Clayton Plaza Hotel

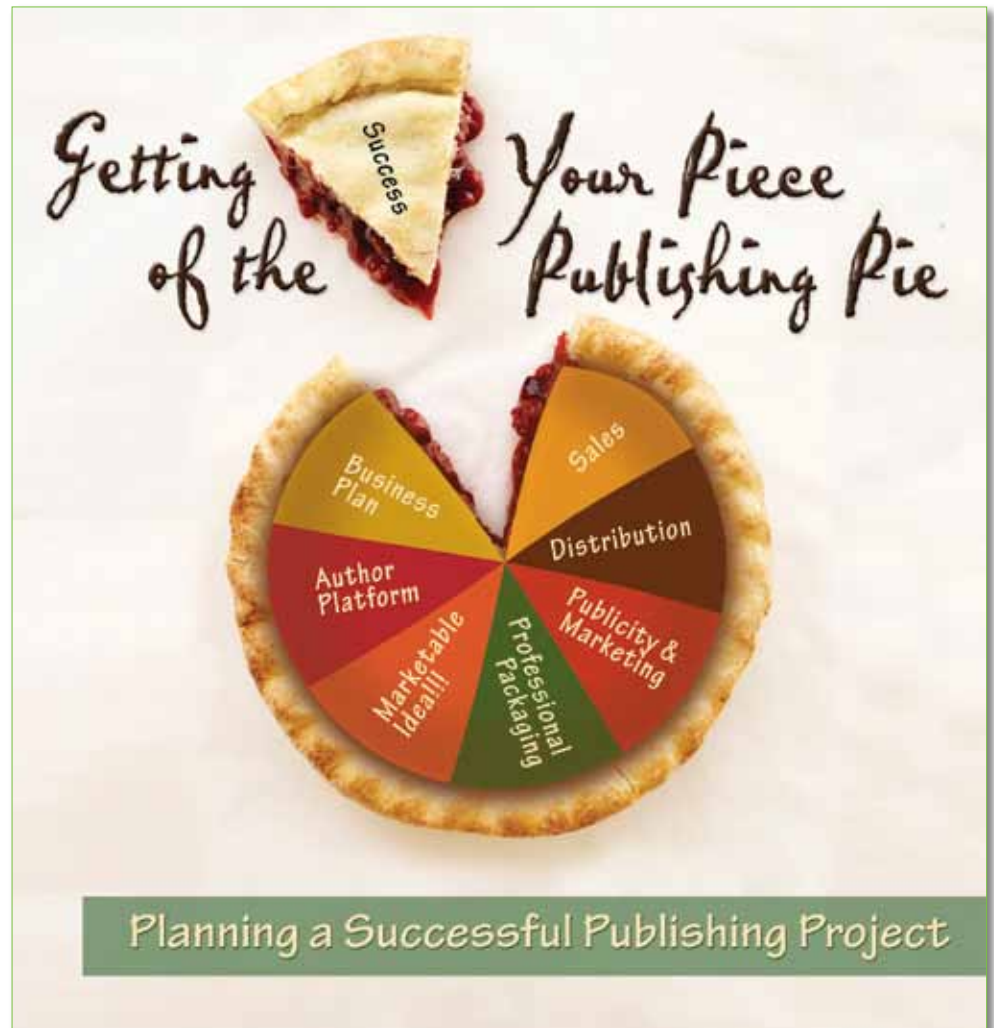
That's when you can savor a day of interactive workshops, presentations, personal consultations and networking, all designed to help you plan your projects more profitably and market your work more effectively. The day's agenda features easy-to-implement, forward-thinking insights from Profitable **Publishing Guru Marion Gropen**, **Social Media Pioneer Deltina Hay** and more. *Save the date NOW!*

We know money is tight for everyone, so we're very happy to bring you an affordable full day filled with practical, usable information that you would normally have to travel to the coasts to find, at a much higher cost. And we're bringing it all here to St. Louis!

**Publishing business & finance expert, Marion Gropen** focuses on helping companies keep more of the money they make, and on picking the best possible courses of action for those companies. Marion is the author of the ebook, *The Profitable Publisher: Making the Right Decisions*. She has also authored several excellent downloadable tools that assist small presses in pricing their books and improving their profitability.

Marion's business, Gropen Associates, specializes in providing financial and management expertise for publishers, including budgeting, pricing, negotiating rights and intellectual property on a question-by-question basis, as well as speaking, teaching and writing on the topic.

**Veteran web developer and publisher, Deltina Hay** is a pioneer of social media and web 2.0, especially as it applies to small business and the



**Mark your calendars for a day-long SLPA publishing event  
November 13, 2010!**

publishing industry. She is the owner of Dalton Publishing and the consulting and web 2.0 development firm, Social Media Power. She also founded the innovative social media website service, PlumbSocial.com.

Hay has the advantage over many social media consultants in that she is both a developer and a user of social media. As a publisher and small business owner, she knows firsthand how to apply the tools of social media to the industry, and as a developer, knows how to build them. While she has taught at the university level, her deep working knowledge of

social media ideas as well as how to apply them in the real world make her presentations and writings some of the most exciting and accessible in the industry today. She's the author of *A Survival Guide to Social Media* and *Web 2.0 Optimization*, one of the easiest-to-use, most comprehensive guides on the market.

We're very excited to bring these experts (and more) to town to spend a day with us. Don't miss it! Watch your email and the SLPA site for all the details, coming soon! 📖



## Book Expo America 2010

by Kim Wolterman

As I mentioned in last month's SLPA newsletter, following Publishing University in New York was Book Expo America (BEA). BEA is the largest gathering of book industry representatives in the United States. Nearly 22,000 book publishers, authors, librarians and book retailers attended this year's event. Over 2,000 booths lined the exhibition hall, and more than 500 authors autographed their books. The Independent Book Publishers Association had a large booth where members can, for a small fee, have their book(s) displayed. In addition to the exhibition hall, BEA offered over 60 educational sessions for attendees including breakfast and lunch meetings with prominent authors.

Since I was already in New York for Publishing University, I decided to stay for the two days of BEA. I pre-registered for the Children's Book and Author Roundtable breakfast as well as the Adult Book and Author Roundtable Breakfast. The opening night Keynote speaker was Barbra Streisand and every registered attendee could theoretically obtain a free ticket to hear her discuss her upcoming book on home design. Publishing University conflicted with the ticketing process, so I missed her talk. Though some said I didn't miss much.

The exhibit hall was enormous and frankly I barely got around to all the booths in two days. I understand they are returning to a three-day format in 2011 because many people had the same issue. Author book signings took place in the same area, so congestion was certainly an issue. Most booths offered new books at no charge, and in fact my "free" books cost me \$40 to ship back home at the end of the show!

In addition to getting to meet some of my favorite authors, it was enlightening to see how the authors (or their publishers) promoted the books. From fully dressed characters to scratch-and-sniff stickers (wouldn't that be great for a wedding or cook book?), creativity filled the exhibition hall.

The Children's Book and Author breakfast was moderated by Sarah Ferguson, the

Duchess of York. Since the scandal had just broken (alleging that she had tried to sell access to Prince Andrew), we weren't quite certain if she would show up or be in jail. But show up she did, and poked fun at herself on several occasions. She mentioned that she should take a few pages from her own children's book *Ashley Learns About Strangers*.

Other authors on the panel included Richard Peck, Cory Doctorow, and Mitali Perkins. When asked how he became a Young Adult author, Doctorow revealed that his dad was a big story-teller, and his endings always changed. This is why Cory allows his readers to change the endings to his stories. My favorite line of Peck's was, "The only way we can write is by the bridges we left burning behind us." And Perkins suggested that libraries are windows and mirrors. The windows allow you to explore places you have never been, and the mirrors enable you to see yourself in the stories. Her take on why she writes for young adults is that, "If life is a narrative arc, 7th grade is when the plot thickens."

The Adults Book and Author breakfast had a vastly different feel as it was moderated by Jon Stewart. He was very entertaining as he moderated an impressive panel consisting of Condoleezza Rice, John Grisham and Mary Roach. Stewart introduced Grisham as the author of *The Pelican Brief*, *A Time to Kill*, *A Time to Kill the Pelican....* Grisham stated that he reads small time obituaries because they print the full names of the deceased. You can then use the name in your book then because they can't sue. He also told the audience that until you are writing one page every day, you are not a writer. Roach advised authors to "trust your instincts, believe in yourself." And Rice suggested that an audience member "seek your mentors as people who are interested in you, not people who look like you."

Book Expo America was amazing. The excitement and energy at the event was contagious, and it made me proud to call myself an author AND a publisher.

Kim Wolterman is author and publisher of *Who's Been Sleeping in My Bed(room)? Researching a St. Louis County, Missouri Home*.



Kim Wolterman with Clinton Kelly



Sarah Ferguson, the Duchess of York



Tim Gunn

## 10 steps to online success for the independent author: marketing your book before and after publication

**Peter N. Jones, Ph.D.**

To be a successful independent author requires a lot of hard work. Not only do you have to write, but you also have to market and promote your work. However, with the hard work comes a great reward – the ability to be a successful indie author and writer who is living the dream. One of the ways you can pursue your dream of independent author status is through the internet. How do you utilize the power and reach of the internet to market your books?

Marketing your book online is both rewarding and challenging. It's rewarding because much of what you can do online is either free or low cost. Knowing what to do and in what order, however, can be quite a challenge. Below are ten general steps to marketing your book online that you'll need to follow on your road to becoming a successful indie author. If your marketing and promotion efforts are haphazard, you'll put in a lot of effort, but be frustrated with the results. If you do them in the right sequence, on the other hand, your marketing efforts will yield exponential, long-term results.

Whether your book is being published through a traditional publishing house or you are self-publishing, you must take a highly active role in promoting and marketing your book. The ten steps described below are aimed at building interest and drive sales. Implement them in the order given to maximize your online marketing and promotion efforts.

### SIX MONTHS OUT

#### 1. Create a website for your book

No, not an author website tacked onto the back of your publisher's site. You need your own website where you can be in charge of the content, with the title of your book as your domain name.

Hire a professional copywriter to write your front page, and make sure you optimize your site for both search engines and customers. Writing is not the same as copy writing. Don't make the mistake of thinking that, simply because you've just written a book, you are up to the task of writing copy for your own site.

### FOUR MONTHS OUT

#### 2. Set up a blog and start blogging about your book.

Now it's time to create a blog for the specific purpose of connecting to and initiating dialogue with others about the concepts and ideas in your book. Think of your blog as an extension of and supplement to your website. At least two posts a week is ideal. Also start leaving comments on the blogs of other people whose area of interest is related to your book. When you

leave a comment, be sure to include your full name, the title of your book, and a link back to your website or blog. Continue leaving comments and blogging about the content of your book for the next 18 to 36 months.

#### 3. Start writing articles for online publications.

There are a number of places to broadcast your articles on the Internet. Write 500- to 750-word articles related to the topic of your book. Publish as many as you can before your book comes out both in what are called article directories and online magazines.

At the end of each article add an author box where you tell about yourself and your book. Add a link to your website or blog. End with a call-to-action. (For example: To read the first chapter for free, click here.) Continue writing articles aimed at your intended readers for the next 18 to 36 months.

### TWO MONTHS OUT

#### 4. Set up a virtual book tour on the internet.

Prior to going on virtual tour with my book, I had no idea such an opportunity even existed. I just assumed I would be going out on a traditional book tour. Going virtual, though, was so much better! Here's why:

- Watching news of your book spread from one blog site to another is exciting.
- Seeing your book title pop up in different places all over the Internet is exhilarating.
- Reading the comments that other people leave for you is priceless.
- Looking at your book from another reader's perspective gives you great insight.
- Spending money on travel is unnecessary. The entire tour is done from the comfort of your home.

Contact bloggers who cover your book's topic. Offer to send them a review copy of your book in exchange for a review on their blog during your virtual tour. Set the start date for your Virtual Book Tour two weeks after your book is published. Then fill it with as many virtual stops as possible.

### AS SOON AS YOUR BOOK COMES OUT

#### 5. Let people know you are available for interviews.

There are many sources for Internet interviews and tons of people interested in interviewing you. Jack Canfield said that, when marketing *Chicken Soup for the Soul*, it was his goal to get five interviews a day. This is a strong marketing strategy. While you may not be up to the task of five a day, five a week will go a long way toward getting your name and book out there and talked about. Continue actively giving and seeking interviews for one full year after your book comes out.

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## 10 steps to online success ... *continued*

### 6. Write a steady stream of press releases about your book.

Let people know anything newsworthy, including your book release date, Virtual Book Tour schedule, upcoming speaking engagements, and any awards you receive. Submit these to all the free press release wires. Also use the paid PR wires for really special events. Continue writing press releases and announcements about your book for one year.

### TWO MONTHS AFTER

### 7. Use social media tools and networks to promote your book.

You can go crazy using all the social media tools, so pick one or two to start. Set up your profile and get started promoting your book. The important thing is to become part of the community and to remain active. As the year progresses, add additional social media tools.

### 8. Enter your book in national contests.

Getting recognized by winning or being a finalist in a national contest will give your book lots of attention and exposure. Besides having one of those fancy gold stickers placed on its front cover, your book will also be placed on a national book list that is both published online and sent in print to everyone in the literary world. Enter your book in national contests the first and second year after it comes out.

### SIX MONTHS AFTER

### 9. Create a book trailer video.

This can be a big expense, so consider whether you want to create a video of your book yourself or hire someone else to do it for you. If you hire another company, you may lose editorial and content control but gain access to that company's marketing network. If you do it yourself (as I did), you may have a learning curve while putting the video together, but you'll have complete control over content and product.


Make your book trailer informational, entertaining, short (no more than three minutes) and professional. Then broadcast it everywhere! To help you do that, use Tube Mogul to send it to up to 13 different video aggregates. For the next year, make additional one-minute videos about your book and broadcast them.

### EIGHT MONTHS AFTER

### 10. Use Google AdWords to advertise your book.


Google AdWords is Google's own version of pay-per-click advertising. AdWords are the "sponsored links" that appear on the right side of the Google search results page. Since you, the advertiser, will pay every time someone clicks on your link, think carefully about the amount you want to pay each month for this kind of advertising.

If you know what keywords to use and what niche market you want to target, this can be very effective advertising. Registration and set-up are easy, and you can make changes to keywords at any time to maximize your success. Continue placing Google AdWords for as long as you like.

Effectively marketing and promoting your book online doesn't have to be haphazard. There is a way to let people know your book exists, and enticing them to take action will increase the book's visibility and sales. In order to do this, you will need to take a very active role in promoting and marketing your book. Follow these ten steps in the order given and you will be well on your way to becoming a successful independent author and writer. 

Peter N. Jones, Ph.D. is Director of the Bauu Institute and Press (<http://www.bauuinstitute.com>). The Bauu Institute is a science and applied research institute. Since 1998 they have conducted a wide range of environmental, psychological, and social science projects. The institute also publishes various forms of books, manuscripts, cards, technical documents, and other media with cultural themes.

## Help select the cover for SLPA's contest-winning book!

**Mandy Langston Manley, our Contest Winner** has been meeting with the Production Team to work on her upcoming novel, *Foundations*. Soon, the SLPA web site will feature a "Vote for your favorite cover" contest. Participants will have three cover designs to choose from. Plus, September meeting attendees will be able to vote onsite at the meeting. Watch your email and the web site for details! 

You are invited to submit items and articles to *SLPA News and Views*.

**Next deadline: September 20**  
**Don't be late – no kidding!**

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

## Questions about SLPA?

Contact membership chairperson:  
Christine Frank at **(314) 205-2679** or  
e-mail **MemberChair@stlouispublishers.org**

*SLPA News & Views* is edited by: SLPA Newsletter Editor  
Maria Rodgers O'Rourke **Maria@mrocommunications.com** and  
designed by SLPA member Peggy Nehmen: **pnehen@n-kcreative.com**

